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HOMES OF THE PSALMS

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HOMES OF THE PSALMS

THEIR ORIGINAL MEANING AND STRUCTURE ILLUSTRATED BY THE SURROUNDINGS IN WHICH THEY WERE FIRST USED

BY

STACY WADDY, M.A.

SECRETARY OF THE SOCIETY FOR THE PROPAGATION OF THE GOSPEL

LONDON

SOCIETY FOR PROMOTING CHRISTIAN KNOWLEDGE

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DEDICATED

TO THE CHERISHED MEMORY OF

JOHN P. PETERS, PH.D., SC.D., D.D.

AUTHOR OF "THE PSALMS AS LITURGIES"

AND TO ALL FELLOW-PILGRIMS WHO HAVE FOUND THE HOLY LAND ILLUSTRATE THE HOLY BOOK

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PSALM LXXXIV

TRANSLATED LITERALLY, AND ARRANGED AS A PROCESSIONAL

(*The route may be followed on the sketch-plan. It is marked by a dotted line.*)

At the Mustering-place, on the Western Hill.

Opening Ode :

How beloved Thine abode, Lord of Hosts !
I have longed, yea fainted, for the courts of the Lord.
With heart and flesh I shout the joy-cry to the God of my life.
The very birds have found a home, and the swallow a nest where she put her young; Thine altars, Lord of Hosts, my king and my God.
Happy they that inhabit Thine house.

Rubric : Let them praise Thee ; (a direction for the shout of praise accompanying the first sacrifice, indicated by " Selah ").

The procession moves off.

Marching-song : Happy he whose strength is in Thee.

Rubrical directions as to the route :

(They cross) the causeway in the midst (that is, between the two cities on the two hills) ;
In the valley of weeping ;
The fountain men made (the *ain* or spring of living water which yet at that spot is artificial, the upper Pool of Siloam) ;
The leader encircles the pool (the lower Pool of Siloam, the obvious end of the outward route) ;
From rampart to rampart they go (climbing up Zion towards the Temple) ;
The God of Gods is seen in Zion (His shrine comes in view).

Anthem (a summons-cry to God before sacrifice) :

Lord God of Hosts, hear my prayer ; hearken, God of Jacob.

Selah (the second sacrifice before the gate).

Inside the royal palace :

Prayer for the King : Behold, O God our shield, and regard the face of Thine anointed.

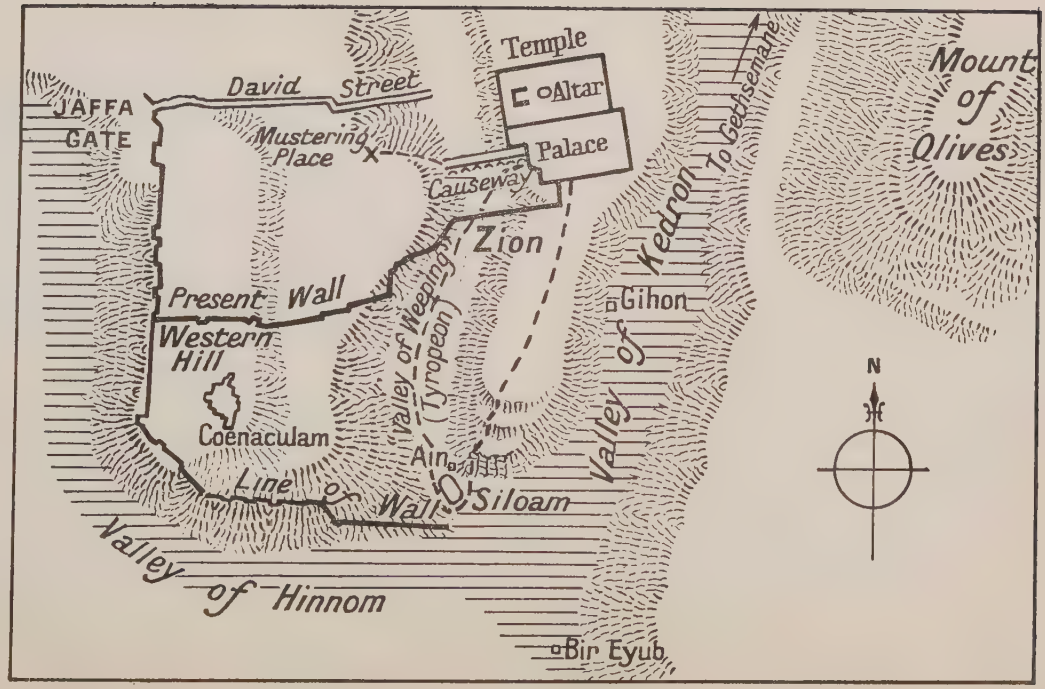
At the threshold of the Temple itself :

Prostration-cry : Better a day in Thy courts than an army; I had rather be the threshold in God's house than a fortress in the cities of the godless.

Purification-cry (to be used during the act of washing by the worshippers) : For sun and shield is the Lord of Hosts; favour and honour the Lord giveth, and refuseth no good to those who walk in cleanness.

(The great sacrifice at the altar follows.)

Praise-cry : Lord of Hosts, happy he who trusteth in Thee.


Temple
Altar
Palace
David Street
JAFFA GATE
Mustering Place
Causeway
Zion
Present Wall
Western Hill
Coenaculam
Valley of Weeping (Tyropeon)
Ain Siloam
Line of Wall
Valley of Hinnom
Valley of Kedron to Gethsemane
Gihon
Mount of Olives
Bir Eyub
N

PLAN OF JERUSALEM

To illustrate the processional route indicated in Psalm lxxxiv. It illustrates also Psalms cxviii., xxiv., and the sequence-liturgy of processional Psalms cxlv.-cl. These do not indicate a muster-place or a route, but show that at a certain point the procession reached Zion and passed on into the Temple; probably the place of gathering and route indicated in lxxxiv. were standard for processional liturgies.

The Jaffa Gate, David Street, the present line of the southern wall, and the Cœnaculum, or place of the Last Supper, are marked in the plan; they are features of Jerusalem today; by reference to them the visitor may follow the ancient track, now buried deep beneath his feet.

There were several causeways across the Tyropeon Valley, within a short distance of one another. One still exists under the elevated street that enters the Temple area at the Bab el Silsileh; another formerly entered the Temple at Robinson's Arch, and would seem the most likely for processional use. The track of southern wall on the western hill varied; the line shown is that of the wall restored by Nehemiah. The north wall then ran from the Temple to the modern Jaffa Gate. In our Lord's time, it ran farther north.

ACKNOWLEDGMENT

Numerous quotations will be found of the translation of the Psalms made by Dr. Peters in his book " The Psalms as Liturgies." Permission to make these quotations has been given by the Macmillan Company, U.S.A., owners of the copyright, and by Messrs. Hodder and Stoughton, publishers in England. Their generosity deserves my grateful acknowledgment.

INTRODUCTION

THE kind of suggestions which this book offers for the increased enjoyment of the Psalms is best indicated by the treatment of Psalm lxxxiv. in the first chapter, and by a short account of the way in which the book came to be written. I was in Palestine for nearly seven years, in peace and war. We who lived in constant sight of the holy places, and in daily touch with the people whose life still reproduces much of the life of Bible times, were always on the lookout for scenes and phrases that illustrated the Bible. It was a fascinating hobby in a busy life. It was an ever-renewed thrill to hear and see the crashing progress of a Palestinian storm, when the "former rains" broke up the long drought of summer, and amidst the flash of its lightnings and roll of its thunder and pelting of its driven rain to read such a storm-description as that of Psalm xxix. It was a joy to add to one's collection of Bible phrases still in common use or watch Bible processes still in practice; to find that in many villages the land held in common is still allocated by lot for the yearly cultivation, and that a pleased cultivator will still cry, "The lot has fallen unto me in a fair place; I have a goodly portion"; to hear the water-seller in Jerusalem still calling almost the actual words, "O every one that thirsteth,

come buy of me without money"; to find that when the husband waits far from the house while the wife is in travail, the messenger of good news still came running to him with the cry, "I bring good tidings of great joy; unto us a son is born"; or to watch the grain-seller giving "good measure, pressed down, and running over," and to know that there are tricks of the trade by which he might easily make a difference of nearly twenty per cent. in the weight he gives for the price. Psalms, Prophets, Gospels, and the historical books all took new colour; there seemed no limit to this delightful game.

Then came along a man, Dr. John Peters, who showed us that the gains we could win might go far beyond mere picturesque illustration and added vividness. We might get fundamental gains in interpretation. The library of the Old Testament is a literature not of detached religious thinking, but most closely knit with the ordinary life of a people and with the actual scenes where that life was worked out. To read it on the very spot, to imagine the scenes being enacted before our eyes, by the people of old whose customs and outlook were in many ways similar to those of the people in the actual surroundings today, might make it take a different meaning often from that which it seemed to have when read in an English translation, insensibly tinged by the Christian outlook of the translators, and unconsciously affected by their being Europeans living in a very different climate and landscape. So we who were Christian and British, but were living in the Holy Land in intimate

friendship with its peoples, must go on more seriously and more responsibly with our search after illustrations and our thinking out of their bearing. We had been finding nuggets; they must lead us on to the vein of gold-bearing quartz. There might yet be something new and valuable that we could offer to the Church. The two essential things for us to do were to read and read again the Scriptures in their home setting, putting ourselves by imagination into each scene as if it were just happening, and to get back to the original and most literal meaning of the Hebrew text.

Above all, this applied to the Psalms. It had been done for the historical books and the Prophets by such writers as George Adam Smith and such explorers as Conder. Every year of residence made us more grateful for "The Historical Geography of the Holy Land"; when we were on the 1917 campaign for the liberation of Palestine, the possession of a copy of this book was almost an embarrassment; for while one could not get on without it, on the other hand it was always being "borrowed" without leave; it is inexhaustible and indispensable. But the Psalms have not been treated in the same way. Here are orders of service that once were carried out on actual sites; the composer had before him actual scenes from which he would naturally draw his illustrations, and we must not think of a generalised Palestinian scenery; Samaria or Dan differs enormously from the surroundings of Jerusalem. Also he must arrange for the congregation to manœuvre on an actual area, for we know

from Bible accounts that the Hebrews did not merely stand still in a crowd to worship; when David brought up the Ark, or Nehemiah dedicated the rebuilt walls, the procession was not a mere way of getting to the altar, it was an integral part of the arranged worship. This remains a feature of Eastern Christian and Moslem worship today, and was probably normal in all Hebrew worship. When, therefore, we try to imagine a psalm-service being carried out, as it would have been by those who originated it, we shall expect to find it probably built up on a structure of arranged movement on that actual site, with parts of the psalm allotted for the procession, for the prostration of the worshippers at the entrance of the holy area or at the altar, for the ceremonial act of purification, and for the climax at the altar; the psalm is not merely a continuous hymn sung at one point of the service. Nor was Jerusalem the only place at which orderly liturgical worship had prevailed in Old Testament times; Gerizim and Dan and Bethel had also their orders of service, and the tactical plan of such a liturgy would be carefully worked out for its own site. Could we distinguish which were the psalms that originated at each site? Could we read their words in the most literal original sense, and find them fitting home to their locality? Might we not find something beyond mere picturesque illustration—something telling of the whole basis of liturgical structure, of the art of psalmody and worship, if we thus read and reread them on the spot? If, for instance, Psalm lxviii. was originally a liturgy of Mount Gerizim, as seemed likely for many reasons,

might there not be some special reason why the choir of women was brought in at the middle of the service (verse 11, R.V. translation) if the first part of the service was held at the foot of the mountain and involved a climb up its steepness in procession? Here surely was a fascinating task for us, to read psalms as living orders of service, carried out by a great congregation, with a special meaning in every rubric, a reason for each transition of tone as the worship passed from joyful procession to humble access and on to final assurance.

It is after several years of this happy endeavour that I offer my own contribution on the subject. Of the two requisites for carrying out this process, I must disclaim one; I have no possible right to form opinions about Hebrew scholarship or the literal translation of the text. In this matter I base myself on Dr. Peters, and the quotations I give are those from his book, "The Psalms as Liturgies." Of the other qualification, that of constant and eager endeavour to realise the Psalms as living, moving pictures carried out before the mind's eye on their actual home sites, I hope my book will show that I have my full share. I only hope I can pass on to others some of the joy that this pursuit has brought to me.

My own limited contribution to this study is thus made plain. But my book will also, I hope, be taken as a public tribute of profound gratitude to the very dear and inspiring friend, John Peters, to whose memory I dedicate it. He must not be held responsible for all that I have said in it; but if readers find, as I hope,

some ideas about the Psalms not without interest, these trace back to his inspiration. He was the sort of man who, when you meet him, makes an epoch in your life; who gives not only new thoughts, but a feeling of new power to think for yourself. A man of profound scholarship (Professor of New Testament Languages in the University of the South, U.S.A.), a leader in archæology (he excavated in Babylonia, and wrote many of the archæological articles in the "Encyclopædia Britannica"), he was above all a simple Christian and a devout priest of the Episcopal Church; it was characteristic of him that he wrote a delightful children's story for the gathering of his grandchildren. All his life he loved the Psalms; when I met him in Jerusalem in 1920, an indefatigable man of about eighty, he had come to pay his last visit to the Holy Land, and to read and read again the Psalms while looking out on the very landscapes amidst which they were first used by men trying to draw near to God and to put into words all that was in their hearts. All his life he had gathered notes on the Psalms; but he could hardly bear to round them off into a book and release them. Since his death they have been published, and it is my hope that anyone who is interested by what I say here will turn to his book, a gold-mine on the subject.* For there is a danger lest, owing to its rather high price, and a certain lack of editing and arrangement, this book that might well give pleasure to all lovers of the Psalms should pass almost unnoticed.

* Peters, "The Psalms as Liturgies," Macmillan Company, U.S.A., and Hodder and Stoughton, 20s. See also the same author's "Bible and Spade" (T. and T. Clark).

As no memoir of Dr. Peters has been published, I may be allowed a reminiscence. One morning he came to see me at St. George's Cathedral, Jerusalem, in great excitement. The night before he had been puzzling over the difficult Hebrew text of Psalm lxxxiv. He blew out his candle (we were still primitive in Jerusalem) and went to bed, thinking. Suddenly an explanation struck him; he leapt from bed, lit his candle, and opened the text again. Surely, he felt, he had it at last; the central verses of the psalm were not poetry, but rubrical directions where the procession of worshippers was to march, through historic and suggestive scenes, before they came to the altar in the Temple. Yes, he could follow every step of their way. He literally danced with emotion. In the morning a learned Jewish rabbi came to see him, and Peters propounded his idea; later, he went along to see the most learned of Jerusalem scholars, a Dominican Father; each agreed that the idea would stand, and that the gain in vividness was of absorbing interest. Finally, he said, he wanted to try the idea on some people not colossally learned, but who loved their Bibles and loved Jerusalem; so would my wife and I walk with him over the route indicated in the psalm? *Meminisse juvat.*

But I have had in mind one special class of readers, and have brought out especially one line of thought. It is my duty and pleasure to help my fellow-missionaries, and the Psalms have special lessons for us. In the Old Testament is revealed the purpose of the God of all mankind for His human race, and the plan of

God for carrying out that purpose. There are truths that all men must know; God would reveal them first to a chosen people, in order that through them all men might learn them; thus the races of the world would grow in brotherhood as they grew in truth. There must then be a world-message meant for all mankind, and a messenger race acknowledging a function to proclaim that message world-wide. By the work of Jesus, that function devolves upon the Christian Church; and among the peoples who have received the message, surely it devolves in a special sense upon the British race, in touch as it is with practically every race on earth. Our missionaries are those who consciously accept the world-function of our Church and our race. In the mighty plans of the God of all mankind, they are not the only agents of His purpose; every Christian Englishman in lands overseas is inevitably a missionary; but there can be no class of agents whose work is more important in His sight, more akin to His spirit, than the missionary. And although the Jews of Old Testament times hardly attained to the missionary impulse (with the exception of the author of the wonderful book of Jonah), they did arrive at thoughts about God as the God of all mankind; and in the Psalms we see them, with their hearts bared to God, facing the implications of those thoughts; we see this in the Psalms even more clearly than in Isaiah. It was a struggle to admit that other nations had a share in God's purposes and ambitions; the Psalms show clearly how hard it was to rise above the prayer that God should punish and crush other races and

give Israel world-dominance. But have all British people risen to an entirely different height today? To say of other races, "Their religion is good enough for them," sounds broad-minded; it is certainly better than the "cursing" psalms, but it is below the level reached by a set of Jews worshipping at the Temple of Dan over 2,500 years ago! We have much to learn from the right understanding, for instance, of Psalm lxxxvii.

Also, I believe we missionaries can get help from the Psalms for that which is our special, most difficult, and most fascinating task at this present time. The young Christian Churches in India, Japan, and other places have passed from the stage when they were groups of docile converts around foreign evangelists. They know that they should and must work out for themselves a characteristic indigenous worship. We not only admit this, we glory in it, and look forward to it, and have urged them on to it; and it will be our task to help them in it (but not to help too much, or too magisterially). No one thinks any longer that Anglican Matins or the tunes of Hymns Ancient and Modern are essential parts of the Christian faith. There have been deeply interesting experiments, such as the attempt to frame a Hebrew Christian liturgy. But while everyone admits that there should be indigenous types of worship, everyone also finds it difficult to make a start. A group of Indian Christians cannot sit down and say, "Let there be an Indian liturgy," and find it happen. Are they to start by selection from the rich store of liturgies that are the

heritage of the Catholic Church as a whole? I would suggest that, in the Psalms, there is marked out the framework through which God led a chosen people, just grasping new revolutionary truths and feeling their way towards more, to build up a true and suitable type of worship—their very own, and adapted to their own self-expression; yet also in kinship with other races. It is based on fundamental human needs and impulses; it leads the worshipper through every necessary frame of mind, and leaves it open to him to deepen and accentuate each mood by the words or actions that best appeal to him. It is Hebrew, but it is human—the way man as such approaches God. The study of the Psalms, not merely as devotional poems but as liturgies, can be of special value to all who are interested in the development of characteristic worship in indigenous Churches.

Note.—In quoting the Psalms, I have throughout indicated the source wherever I have used translations from the Vulgate, the Septuagint, the French version, or such translations as those of Driver or Wellhausen. Our own versions are indicated by initials: Authorised Version (A.V.), Revised Version (R.V.), Prayer Book Version (P.Bk.). Where there is no indication, it is Peters's translation that is quoted; his book contains a complete version, and is the nearest possible to the original. In questions of Hebrew scholarship I rely upon him.

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HOMES OF THE PSALMS

PART I

CHAPTER I

A TYPICAL INTERPRETATION: PSALM LXXXIV

(This Psalm is printed in full at the opening of the book, literally translated, arranged as a processional, and illustrated by a sketch-plan.)

Value of literal translation. Guidance from headings prefixed to the Psalms; from rubrical directions occurring in the text; from study of the home setting in which the psalm-liturgy was carried out. Lxxxiv.: the mustering of the procession, looking down on the Temple; opening ode and sacrifice; marching-song for the procession. Rubrics indicating its route, through historic and suggestive scenes, which put challenges to faith and offered reinforcement of it. Arrival at the entrance to the holy area; prostration-cry; welcome to the King; purification-cry before sacrifice; praise-cry. The thought of this psalm completed by Jesus.

IT will be well to show at the outset the line of thought that is to be followed in illustrating the Psalms. The endeavour will be to get back as vividly as possible to the meaning the Psalms had to those who first used them; to enter by imagination into the scene of a Hebrew congregation using its liturgy, and the thoughts that swept their souls. For this purpose, we must take the most literal translation of the Hebrew text. Much is also to be learnt from the headings prefixed to the Psalms, at least from their musical and liturgical notes, such as xlv.: "For the

Chief Musician; set to Lilies; Of the Sons of Korah, Maschil. A Song of Loves"; or xlvi.: "To the Chief Musician, For the Sons of Korah, a song upon Alamoth"; and from rubrical directions occurring in the text, such as "Selah," or lxxxvii. 6: "Singers and pipers together: 'All my fountains in Thee'"—a direction what anthem to sing; or cxviii. 27: "Bind the sacrifice with cords at the horns of the altar." It is, perhaps, unfortunate that the headings and Selahs are omitted in our P.Bk. version, with which Anglicans are usually more familiar than the A.V., which retains them. We learn less from the headings that apply this or that psalm to particular occasions, such as lii.: "A Maschil of David; when Doeg the Edomite came and told Saul and said unto him, David is come to the house of Ahimelech." The attributions to historical events were attached to the Psalms by later commentators; they do not indicate the historical origin of a psalm; lii. was a liturgy for a type of occasion that often recurred in the national life, not a historical poem for one occasion: "Why boastest thou, tyrant, that thou canst do mischief?" In the loving study of the adventurous and God-guided life of the great founder of psalmody, this or that psalm was quoted as particularly illustrative of a particular occasion; and many a biographer since then in studying the life of a great man has applied them in a similar manner. These wonderful poems seem as if they were written for the very man or occasion. Lord Rosebery, in a lecture on Cromwell, quoted cxlix. in this way. Finally, there is much to

learn by conning the Psalms amid the very landscapes that suggested their imagery or were the scene of great events from which the worshippers drew the moral. It is a memorable experience to think over lxviii. at the very foot of its first home, Mount Gerizim, close by Jacob's Well, where He who fulfilled all human feeling after God was to complete the thought of the psalm in His talk with the woman of Samaria (see Chapter XIV.).

The Mustering of the Procession.—Psalm lxxxiv. was a processional liturgy for a great pilgrim festival. The worshippers who were to use it mustered on the western hill, called Zion today, looking down upon the Temple and its courts. It is nearly eighteen centuries since the Jews were masters of Jerusalem, but their chief gathering-place today, their great synagogue, is on the western hill close to the spot where in old times they would muster for this procession. Just below it, across the valley, is the pathetic Wailing Wall, the only spot of the Temple that the Jew may now reach and touch.

Here, with a glorious view of what was then the magnificent and hallowed Temple (now the Moslem "Haram"), the worshippers sang their opening stanza (verses 1-4):

How beloved Thine abode, Lord of Hosts!
I have longed, yea fainted, for the courts of the Lord.
With heart and flesh I shout the joy-cry to the God of my life.
(Driver's translation is splendid; "my heart and my flesh ring out their joy.")
The very birds have found a home, and the swallow a nest where she put her young, Thine altars, Lord of Hosts, my king and my God.
(Tristam describes how abundant and secure the birds are in the Haram today and how he found a sparrow's nest in a chink of the wall; "Land of Israel," viii., p. 186).
Happy they that inhabit Thine house.

Then comes the rubric, "Let them sing Thy praise." This is followed by the Selah, the first sacrifice, offered at this station; not, of course, the great sacrifice on the altar in the Temple, which marked the climax of the day's service. A choir, no doubt, would sing the stanza; but at the close comes from the whole congregation a great outburst of exultant shouts, a *Gloria in Excelsis* from every heart and lip.

Then the procession moves off. But it is not to go direct to the Temple; there is much to do before they will allow themselves to approach the altar of God. They will first put themselves through a pilgrimage in miniature, and follow a route chosen for the suggestive sites by which it will bring them, the self-questionings it will cause them to face, the memories it will stir, the feelings it will evoke. They will put themselves through this devotional preparation; they must draw confidence from the sacred past. Lessons taught to David or Jeremiah on these spots must be driven home into the worshippers' minds so as to be beyond doubt, to become master lights of all their seeing, convictions, axioms, first principles, in the light of which a man forms his judgments instinctively and inevitably. Before a worshipper arrived before the altar of God, let him make his beliefs fill his whole being, and every side of it—logical, emotional, devotional. Let him spare no trouble, but use every means that sanctified common sense can suggest to attain the right mood.

We see now the object of the first part of verse 5. Eastern processions do not march in ranks, they form groups; sometimes they form rings and like David

"dance before the Lord"; their unity consists not in regular formation but in being possessed by a common thought, fused in a joint enthusiasm. They clap hands in marching rhythm. In some of the processional psalms a catchword is given for them to use as a marching-song. So it is here. The master-thought of the day's worship is to be "Happy he whose strength is in Thee." Then let them say it over and over, all of them together; let them prove it over and over, for they are going to sites where it was proved of old; let them feel it over and over; let them lock it home on their hearts at the altar; and for ever let it be a truth that is above challenge, an issue settled for ever. "Happy he whose strength is in Thee." Anyone who has seen, for instance, the Neby Musa procession at Jerusalem will remember how it illustrates this and other psalms. They march along; catchwords and cries are repeated over and over, with mounting excitement; some dance in rings, some wave swords: everyone lets himself go whole-heartedly. There is a common feeling, a crowd-mind, which catches up and inflames all its members. A rhythm is marked by the clapping of hands and the clanking of staves on the ground. The Christian processions are, as a rule, more restrained; but on Easter Eve at the Abyssinian service the priests dance in procession, and at the Holy Fire there is the wildest excitement. The best Bible illustration is the account of David's service at the bringing up of the Ark to Jerusalem (2 Sam. vi.). The Jewish service of "Purim," commemorating the deliverance by Esther, is marked by similar feeling.

The Route of the Procession.—This is actually indicated in the psalm itself if we translate literally verses 5, last half, to 7. Our translators, not understanding this, have thought that these rubrical directions were part of the psalm to be sung, and therefore have tried to make poetical and devotional meanings for them. Different versions give very different meanings; our Prayer Book is very happy, and its translation of these verses has given comfort to many a Christian in trouble.

First Rubric.—Translated "In whose heart are Thy ways"; literally, "In the midst thereof, the causeway."

At the time of, or soon after, David's capture of Jebus, the city spread from Zion, the eastern hill, to the western; a wall was built from what is now the site of the Jaffa Gate to join the Temple at the present Gate of the Chain. The Tyropeon Valley, then deep and precipitous, became the middle or heart of the city; it was crossed by at least two causeways or bridges south of this wall, and a road ran down its bed to Siloam. The procession, mustering at a point on the western hill opposite "Robinson's Arch," probably passed on to the "causeway in the midst" of the city; remains have been found of a bridge, probably built by Solomon, under those of a later Herodian structure. There is now about 80 feet of debris and rubbish filling up the valley here. Warren's story of his excavations here reads like a romance (see "Underground Jerusalem").

Second Rubric.—Verse 6, literally, "In the valley

of weeping." P.Bk. version of this and the next rubric combined reads, "Who going through the vale of misery use it for a well." The causeway would lead them, if they chose, direct to the Temple. But they are not yet prepared. So they are to turn off south, down the valley, towards Siloam, with sacred Zion towering above them on their left; they go down the "valley of weeping." From earliest times the western slopes of this valley had been used for the burial of the dead, so it is referred to as the "valley of weeping." Similarly at Bethel one of the valleys, full of tombs, was called the "vale of the weepers" (Judges ii. 1).

One feature that strikes the visitor to Jerusalem today is the way a city of the dead surrounds it. The valley of Kedron is surely the most remarkable tomb-field of the world; Jewish on the one side, Moslem on the other, they lie there; the Jewish stones are set almost as close as paving-stones. There is an interesting conjecture connected with our Lord's triumphal entry into Jerusalem on Palm Sunday. His route led through this burial area. The people were acclaiming Him as Messiah. The religious leaders asked Him to stop them: "Rebuke Thy disciples." He replied: "If these (the living) should hold their peace, these stones (the dead) would cry out."

So it was not casually, but with deep design, that the procession of Psalm lxxxiv. was directed to go down the "valley of weeping." They are to face the fact of death. The English visitor finds something deeply impressive in those fields of graves, though they are of people of other races and religions. If among them

lay our own beloved dead, how poignant they would be. Hardly a man in that procession but had stood by the side of an open grave. Face the fact of death and bereavement. What hope is there that can stand by us in that hour, when "the ploughshare of deeper passion tears down to the primitive rock"? One cannot pretend a belief at such a moment; either it is so real that death ceases to have a sting, the grave a victory, or it is nothing. Man becomes powerless any longer to help and care for the loved one, at death. Is there a God to whom he can hand back the dead, and be happy and secure? Let the procession pass before the tombs; let each man say, if he can, after this poignant test: "Happy he who trusteth in Thee."

> "How little we can know, how little see;
> Only that Thou art there."

If he cannot—then drop out of this procession; come not to the altar of God with half-beliefs or pretences. "Though I go down into Sheol, Thou art there." We can imagine some of the worshippers using here another psalm in which the thought of death is fully faced, xxxix., with its conclusion: "And now, Lord, what is my hope? Truly my hope is even in Thee."

We know also that the tomb of David was in this valley; it is quoted as a well-known landmark down to the time of Herod. It is hard for us to realise all that the life of David meant to the Jews in oppression and exile, and how they clung with passionate confidence and daily thought to the Messianic hope of the coming of the great Deliverer-King of the seed of David. So the first stage of this pilgrim-route was designed to

set them athrill with all this group of feelings: patriotism and religion; past glories and future hopes; deliverance and world-mastery. Every strongest chord of the human heart was touched as they marched by the tomb of David on the way to the stronghold of Zion. And the upshot of it all was the conviction: "Happy he whose strength is in Thee. It always was so, it always will be so. It is so in life, it is so in death. It is for the man, it is for the nation. It *is* so."

THIRD RUBRIC.—Verse 6, literally "the fountain they set." The phrase is striking, and the language exact. . . . A fountain (*ain*) is a living spring, something that God made; not a pool or cistern (*birket*) that men set; but here is a fountain that men made. This exactly describes the next landmark to which they go in the valley; it is not a contradiction but a sign of careful accuracy. For at Siloam is a fountain of living water that still runs there, but human agency set it there; also a *birket*, or pool, now dry. In 2 Kings xx. 20 we read how Hezekiah made "the pool and the conduit, and brought the water into the city"—the only spring of water was thus made available for the defenders and hidden from their attackers. The enormous difference which this made is illustrated by the sufferings of the Crusaders from thirst when attacking the city. One can scramble through this tunnel today. So on this procession route the fountain that was vital to the city's safety, that was at once a gift of God and an achievement of good King Hezekiah, was an obvious point to mention in rubrical directions.

Also it was rich in suggestive memories. The Jews took singularly little interest of an archæological kind in old sites or buildings, but they were most sensitive to the teachings of local associations. Here would be called up all the crowded associations that clustered round the one spring of Jerusalem, now called "The Virgin's Spring"; the ancient Gihon, whose water the tunnel brought from outside walls to this point. There was the exploit of the capture of impregnable Jebus that had defied Joshua, that sang taunt-songs over its wall which stung the heart of David. The Jebusites also had faced the problem how to get water inside their city from a spring outside it; they had made a "gutter"—not a tunnel-conduit like Hezekiah's, but a steep shaft hidden in the living rock of the cliff; Warren discovered it in his excavations. It was indeed a "Victoria Cross" action to clamber up that dark gutter, helpless if discovery was made of the daring intruder; but Joab did it, raised a panic, and was able to open the gate to David. The excavations now being made by the Palestine Exploration Fund on Ophel seem to show that David attacked from the north of the ridge and broke down the wall; the breach lies there still in unrepaired ruin. We may notice how many cities in ancient sieges were entered by such tunnels. We hear of it at Troy; the passage can be seen by which Antiochus captured Amman; the fellaheen got into Jerusalem thus in 1827. Es Salt has such a shaft. It was almost a necessary feature of an acropolis.

Then there is the story of Solomon, a vivid picture of the proclamation of two rival kings on one day and

within half a mile of one another (1 Kings i. 5-53). David was old; Joab attempted to seize the throne for Adonijah by a *coup d'état*. Public life in an Eastern city centres round the places of water-drawing; crowds gather today in Jerusalem even round the prosaic iron stand-pipes set up under British rule. While waiting to draw water they gossip and pass round the news and quarrel. Adonijah went to the well of En-rogel, now Bir Eyub, just below Siloam, and his followers raised the shout for him as king. Nathan hurried to David. Quickly the youth Solomon was sent out to the other spring, Gihon, proclaimed king, and the shout raised for him. Its noise reached the gathering at En-rogel; at once the rebel movement collapsed, and its supporters slunk off to hide.

One more story would be suggested, in which God had mightily delivered His people. The irresistible Assyrians came against Hezekiah. Where are the gods of other races? they taunted. Why should your God avail you? It would be close to the spring of Gihon that Rabshakeh stood and "spake in the ears of the people on the wall." The worshippers in the procession could turn the taunt into triumph. Isaiah's message was true. "Thus saith the Lord about Sennacherib, The virgin the daughter of Zion laugheth thee to scorn; I will defend the city to save it." Standing by the "fountain they set," truly the worshippers can say, "Happy he whose strength is in Thee."

Fourth Rubric.—Verse 6, translated by P.Bk., "The pools are filled with water." Literally, "the leader encircles the pool."

Just below the *ain* of running water is a *birket* or pool at Siloam, for catchment water from the hills. It is still there, though now dry and growing onions. It was just inside the wall and by the water-gate; it was the obvious termination for the outward journey of the procession. So the procession-leader takes them round it; then they return back on their homeward journey to the Temple.

At this spot the number of historic sites in their view was almost bewildering. There is the well of En-rogel; here David's spies waited (2 Sam. xvii. 17), to bring him news when he had to flee from Absalom, a name that even now stirs a Jew to anger. By this valley, which runs to the Dead Sea, the last King of Jerusalem fled vainly from Nebuchadnezzar (2 Kings xxv. 4). In Ezekiel's great vision (xlvii.), when the glory of the presence of God should return to the Temple, down this valley the holy waters of the great river were to run, waters of healing, that should sweeten even the Dead Sea which they would reach. Just outside Siloam is Isaiah's tree, recalling his hideous martyrdom. On the east is the Mount of Offence, where Solomon built shrines of idolatrous worship for his heathen wives (1 Kings xi. 7-8). It was here that Ezra and Nehemiah gathered the people for the reading of the Law, for repentance and worship, after the time of strain and crisis, anguish and joy, that ended in the rebuilding of the walls (Neh. viii.). Every tragedy, every deliverance, would give them the same moral: "Happy he whose strength is in Thee."

Fifth Rubric.—Verse 7, P.Bk. translation, "They

shall go from strength to strength." Literally, "From rampart to rampart they go."

To reach the Temple hill, they now turn back from the pool, and must climb the eastern hill. It is scarped and cut; "from rampart to rampart" would be a literal description of their path. They had to mount about 250 feet to the Temple, which stood on the crowning height of the early city. It puzzles visitors to Jerusalem today, who have rightly formed this vision of the city, to find that the Temple area is actually the lowest spot within the walls, except the valley running west of it. The ground rises continuously northwards from Siloam, and the city has continuously shifted northwards. David's city is now outside the walls and below them, and is laid out in cabbage-patches. Another puzzle is that the name Zion has shifted from the eastern hill to the westward; such shifting frequently happens in Palestine, and is confusing when we try to work out the exact site of events. A good instance is Harosheth, Sisera's headquarters. The name still survives, but in a village about a mile away from the actual site.

The procession passes through Zion. With later growth this became to Jerusalem what "the city" is to greater London, but a priestly quarter, not commercial. As will be seen from Psalm cxviii., some processions had a special and triumphant cry appropriate to this part of the route (p. 242); lxxxiv. does not provide one, but the same thought would be stirred: "The right hand of the Lord winneth victory" (cxviii. 15-16).

Sixth Rubric.—Verse 7*b*, P.Bk. translation, "Unto the God of Gods appeareth every one of them in Zion." Literally, "The God of Gods is seen in Zion."

They reach the crest of the hill. The Holy Place is revealed, and the prayer goes up, "Lord God of Hosts, hear my prayer; hearken, O God of Jacob." Here, no doubt, at the gates the Temple choir would await them; there follows another Selah, a sacrifice, and outburst of music and praise. Cxviii. at this point supplies a special summons to "open the gate of the Lord"; so does xxiv., "Lift up your heads, O ye gates"; and the Jubilate, c., is a song to be used at this point of a processional festival. The southern entrance to the Temple, from Zion, was through the royal palace. The "ascent by which he went up to the House of the Lord" was one of the wonders shown by Solomon to the Queen of Sheba. Macalister has made the interesting suggestion that Solomon kept the old north gate of Jebus, when the building of the Temple supplied the defences further north, and adapted it as a propylea to the ascent to his palace (see "Excavations on Ophel," *Palestine Exploration Fund Annual*, 1923-25). The palace was more than a residence of the King; it was like the Mogul palaces at Delhi and Agra, a collection of public buildings, courts, stair-ascents, prison-cells, guard-rooms. We realise vividly in the story of Jeremiah how the life of the city centred round the palace and Temple.

At this point the King joins the procession, and the royal anthem is sung (9): "Behold, O God our shield, and look upon the face of Thine anointed." There are

no further rubrics, but there are further stages of the service, clearly discernible, with appropriate words for each.

Passing through the palace, they come now to the threshold of the Temple itself, singing the song of confidence, "Better a day in Thy courts than an army"; our translation says "than a thousand," and makes it seem to mean a thousand days. It means a thousand men, in the sense of 1 Chron. xii. 14: to trust in God is better than to organise armies. It is the persistent Jewish thought, constantly showing in the Psalms; Zion and God's Temple must be inviolable. Then, as they fall flat on their faces in adoration (see Chapter IX.), the cry is provided for them which spiritualises the action: "I had rather be a threshold in God's house (as I lie here, at this moment) than a fortress in the cities of the godless."

Next comes the ritual act of purification, here and in several psalms provided with its own refrain which brings out its moral and ethical meaning (Chapter IX.): "Sun and shield is the Lord of Hosts; favour and honour the Lord giveth; and refuseth no good to those who walk in cleanness"; our translation, "who walk uprightly," confuses the appropriateness of the phrase as an accompaniment to lustration. Now at the climax of this carefully planned preparation the worshippers are ready for the supreme moment, the great sacrifice at the altar. Some psalms, as we shall see, provide special cries, blessings, ejaculations of confidence, for this moment also, and very many of them provide an after-service of praise and thanksgiving. Our psalm

ends with a reminder to the people to carry away with them the key-phrase of the day: "Lord God of Hosts, happy he who trusteth in Thee!"

THE THOUGHT OF THIS PSALM COMPLETED BY JESUS.—Its route was, as we have seen, rich enough in suggestions of confidence to the Jew; the Christian has a right to take all that it meant to the Jew, and to add to it something of new, overwhelming power. For as we walk over that processional route today, it has associations with Jesus that almost make us lose interest in those of the Old Testament. But surely this is not wise. Moreover, Jesus has given us reasons for confidence, especially when we follow our dead into the valley of weeping, or face it ourselves, which are on a totally different level of certainty and comfort. The words of John xiv. 2 were spoken while He walked this very route. With infinitely greater assurance we can say, "Happy he whose trust is in Thee . . . through Jesus Christ our Lord." Saul the Jew could not have said what Paul the Christian did, "To depart . . . is far better." We realise the "glorious Good News of the Blessed Christ" when we see how much it adds to even the highest pre-Christian faith. No man can accuse the Jews of having feared death; the tone of the Psalms about death was brave, but on the whole gloomy. It makes all the difference whether death is leaving home or going home.

Siloam in our Lord's time was walled, and a gate led out into the valley of Kedron. To the fountain at Siloam Jesus sent the blind man for healing. The man bearing a pitcher of water would fill it at this

fountain and be met at this gate. Down the western hill to Siloam ran a street of stone steps; a section of this is now open to view, one of the most precious finds of recent excavation; it passed the house of the High Priest. Down this, from the Last Supper, Jesus would pass, out of the gate, up the valley, to Gethsemane. Back this way He would be brought in captivity, down the valley, in at the gate, up the steps to that house of horror and abomination. His way is before our eyes as we walk.

Of all the observances we practised at Jerusalem perhaps the most impressive was to walk that route on Maundy Thursday evening, in the silence of that wonderful moonlight, and to read the discourses of John xiii.-xvii. on the way; and so to our service at Gethsemane. For "He was wounded for our transgressions." "Happy he whose strength is in Thee." This enrichment of Psalm lxxxiv., getting all its original meaning, but claiming all its later expansion, is a type of the treatment proposed in this book.

CHAPTER II

THE VARIETY OF THE PSALMS

Our versions bring some gain, reading Christian thought into the Psalms. But our way of rendering obscures the variety and vividness of their original use and meaning. They were complex orders of public service, rendered with movement, procession, ceremonial, orchestral music and song; fitted with ode, anthem, refrain, marching-song, litany, ejaculation. Set them in the background of Old Testament life, of national moods and occasions. Imagine them used on their actual site of origin. National liturgies—in victory, defeat, exile, restoration. Community festivals—marriage, harvest, vintage. Personal services—vows, sin-offerings. Literary and didactic psalms.

BY clearer understanding of what the Psalms meant when God first inspired their production, we may find an enriched interest and help in them; but we need feel no fear lest we should forfeit anything of what we now read in them. Some to whom the Psalms in our English versions as continuous poems have been dear may be uneasy lest they should be deprived of something precious. Phrases like those of lxxxiv., "who going through the vale of misery use it for a well," and "they will go from strength," have fitted home into our devotional thinking; to be told that the originals were rubrical directions sounds like an impoverishment. If one may take Dr. Peters as an example, scholar and student as he was, the Bible, and especially the Psalms, were never to him a mere study book, but the Book of Life, living and loved,

throbbing with the life of those whom the Spirit of God inspired to produce its contents, varied as their human experiences, and full of meaning and comfort for all sides of life today to its devout and thankful readers.

The Psalms have for us more meaning than their composers ever knew, or could have put into them. This is rightly so; there is no need for us to eliminate it; it is rich treasure-trove, and belongs to us the finders. We can read into them, and in making translations we have read into them, knowledge about God and life that was only known by later revelation. I hope to show throughout that the thought aimed at by the psalmist finds its "pleroma," its full development and expression, only in Jesus and His teaching. It is not violence that the Christian brings to the Psalms, but fulfilment. We look not merely at what they said, but what they were trying to say. Psalm and prophecy meant more than he who uttered it knew. He used words that, in Matthew Arnold's phrase, were "thrown out at" great truths, eternal, inexpressible. He fashioned the best phrases he could to express the best truth he knew. The great and inspired feature of these phrases is, that they were not "a little truth shut in and much shut out," but that men whom God led on to further truth could still find it fit into the former phrases. These were not cancelled but illuminated; they did not become archaic or out of date.

The great prophetic message to the Jews was, Do not settle on the lees; do not think you have complete knowledge about God and life. Press on and on to more truth; do not be stiff-necked, set in your present

ideas; do not be the sort of people to whom God Himself cannot give new points of view. So it is characteristic of the words used by the truest Jews, especially psalmist and prophet, that they are constantly found capable of meaning bigger things than the writer meant when he said them. The words can be quoted as describing a bigger thing that happened subsequently, a bigger aspect of truth revealed later. They do not bar out this meaning; we do not have to do violence to the words to squeeze it in. Psalms of David could still be used in the changed national life of five hundred years later, not as historical survivals, but full of the very meaning the age needed. So they could be used by the first Christians who knew the life of Jesus; so they can be by us today. The best example of this is the Messianic psalms and prophecies, and their application to Jesus, such as lxxii., "Give the King Thy judgments, O God." The writers expressed an expectation of some glorious event; but until God revealed it by the incarnate life of Jesus, no man could have imagined anything so surpassingly wonderful as that God Himself should thus share in and redeem the life of humanity. Yet the phrases are apt for the great event when it comes. For instance, Peters says of xxii.: "More vividly, if possible, even than the Gospels it described the Cruxifixion, even its details."

The same thought may be applied to the gains that have come by the Christian Church reading into the Psalms the lessons it has learnt of life. Beyond question, some of the most beautiful phrases in our versions

of the Psalms are not translations of the Hebrew, but little Christian poems or epigrams, original in the translator, suggested by some phrase he misunderstood. They are in the mood of the psalm, and the Christian translator, inspired by that mood, has reached to a truth or an expression that the psalmist himself did not. Surely there is no need to forfeit these, nor do we do so when we try to understand exactly what the original meant. We keep all our gains; we get new ones. Examples have already been shown in lxxxiv.; others will appear (see Chapter III.). One way to follow this rich vein is to take a book like Prothero's "The Psalms in Human Life," and see how all down the ages men have found the very meaning they needed in the Psalms, often by interpretations very different from the original and from one another. Sick men, dying men, men on the scaffold, men in battle, defeat, or victory; Catholic and Huguenot, European and Asiatic and African; the knight dedicating himself to chivalry, the monk or friar, the scholar, the theologian, the king, statesman, lawgiver, warrior, or peasant, all have claimed the right to extract the very meaning their heart desired. It was a rightful claim. It is in no way challenged by this present attempt to get back to the original meanings.

What, then, is the gain of doing this? Primarily, that the Psalms become much more closely set in the framework of the Old Testament. There we have a people being educated by God in a unique way. They were to live an ordinary human national life, but with God's point of view made clear about it at every

turn. Like every other people, they had to till a land, earn their living, arrange all social, family, and individual life, work out a code of laws, have national and international relations; they had to produce peasants, warriors, statesmen, kings, poets, philosophers, artists, historians; and along with them a set of men with "fire-eyes," interpreters to pronounce God's verdicts and proclaim God's set of values. This was especially the function of the prophets. But we do not realise how much the proclamations of the prophets were made common coin by being worked into the liturgies and services that all men attended. The Psalms are the liturgies of those services. They were not the product merely of a poet or set of poets; they did not get their circulation merely among those who could be reached by poetry or song. They were the daily services, the special services for occasions, which all men attended; thus they brought their message to the whole nation, in its most impressionable moments. In the Psalms we see a nation, vividly alive, with its whole human needs spread before God.

Variety of Liturgies in the Psalter.—The variety of them is wonderful. A few examples may be cited; others will appear throughout. There were orders of service for the daily morning (iii., lxiii.) and evening sacrifice (iv., cxli.), and a preparation service for the officiating priests (v.) and for worshippers (ci.); and a compline (cxxxiv.). There are liturgies for the great festivals, Passover and Tabernacles, the return of the Ark, the Dedication of the Temple; sometimes single psalms (xlii., lxxxi.), sometimes groups of connected

psalms (cxi. to cxviii., the Hallel) covering an octave. There was a collection of psalms used by pilgrims coming up from Babylon, vividly drawing lessons from the dangers and emotions of the desert route (cxx. to cxxxiv.), and psalms for special pilgrim services (cvii.). There were orders of service for the sick (vi., xiii., xvi.); a marriage liturgy (xlv.), harvest services (lxv., lxvii.), and vintage hymns (lviii., lxxv.), and a shepherd hymn (xxiii.). The national army was constantly going into battle; there were liturgies to be used on the field before the charge (xx., lvi.), and for times of defeat and invasion (x., lii., liv., lix., lx., lxxix.), and siege (xi., xii., xvii.), and appeals to God against other nations, claiming or proclaiming His might and protection (lxxxii., lxxxiii., lxxxvii.); and thanksgivings in times of triumph (ix., xviii., xxi., xxx., lxviii., lxxvi.). There were services when their feet trampled over the ruins of their city and Temple (lxxiv., lxxix., cii.), and when they were restored after captivity (cxvi., cxxvi.), and when they encircled their rebuilt walls with joy (cx., cxviii.). The Jews believed that their enemies even in peace attacked them by curses and magic, causing drought and pestilence; there are numerous liturgies to implore God's protection and counteraction (lii., lv., lxiv., xci., xciv.). There were many services for the days of humiliation and fasting (xxxi., xxxv., xxxviii., xl., lxix., lxxiv., lxxvii., lxxx., cii.); and still more for times of joy and abounding confidence (xxxiii., xxxvii., xlvii., lxxxv., xcii., xcv., xcviii.); there were personal services for the penitent sinner offering his sin-offering (xxii.), his thank-offering

for forgiveness (xxxii.), his prayer in sickness (vi., xiii.), his gratitude in recovery (xvi.). A good many psalms seem to indicate that they were for special vows and offerings apart from the standard services (l. 14; lxvi. 13-15). There are services of pure worship to God in His glory as seen in history (cv., cxiv.), in creation (civ.), and in nature (xix., xxix., xcii., cxlviii.). We see, in fact, the whole heart of a people bared before God in all its varied needs and moods. Such liturgies gain greatly by being read with sympathetic understanding of their origin.

But the Psalms were not all sacrificial liturgies. Every occasion of the life of the community would be linked up with God. Whenever men met together, for a marriage, or harvest or vintage, in the homes or in the wheat-field, there was to be a corporate expression of their joyful relation to Him, though not with sacrifice. So their book of common prayer includes orders of service for these occasions, as ours does not, though we have a service for private Baptism, and the American Prayer Book includes family prayers, and missionary societies have services for the blessing and sending forth of a missionary. There is little doubt that an Indian Prayer Book will include orders of service for family gatherings and group festivals as well as for general congregational services. Peters points out that Babylonian worship was rich in such special services, for guild gatherings such as of artisans and shepherds. In the Eastern Churches a betrothal is usually marked by a formal service in the home.

There are also psalms evidently intended for didactic instruction. Such are the literary prefaces prefixed to collections of psalms (i. to the whole Psalter, ii. to Book I.; cxxxviii. to a small group that form a unit, cxxxviii.-cxliv.), and a literary conclusion to a book, such as lxxii., a poem that like ii. depicts the glories yet to come, and sums up Book II. of the Psalms. Xv. is a "Temple decalogue," says Peters, setting forth the whole duty of man; lxxviii. is for the instruction of the children, and xlix. and lxxiii. face the riddle of life, the apparent success of the wicked. Cxix. is a rosary of twenty-two poems on the Law. Many psalms are alphabetic acrostics, to be more easily memorised; though some of these are liturgical, evidently they were to be learnt by heart by all, and therefore would be commended to their private meditations. All these instructional psalms were for use in public services; they might be used as a didactic part of the praise-song before the worshipper departed, parallel, for instance, to such conclusions of a service as we find in lxxxi. 8-14, l. 16-23. In fact, though we find the Psalter so supremely fitted for personal and devotional reading, and in later times the synagogue had already begun to find it so, yet in its first intention it was a book of common prayer for the public use of national, congregational, or group gatherings. While we need not forfeit our own use, we miss something of its richness and variety unless we also read it in its original meaning.

There are also doxologies ending four of the five books (p. 51). Cxxxvi. is an elaborate grace before

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a feast that often terminated a sacrificial service (2 Sam. vi. 19). Even if a psalm were an order of service, it might not provide within itself its own special odes or cries for each part of the service; so there were psalms for use as required at this or that point of any service: li. for the purification, xciii. an opening or closing vision, c. for a processional on entering the gates of the Temple. They always ended with a song of adoration and praise, but lxxxiv., for instance, does not furnish its own praise-cry; there was a selection for general use, such as viii., xcviii. In cxvi. we have a good example of the way the "man of understanding" like Chenaniah (1 Chron. xv. 22) would compile a special service. The people are back from exile, and would offer their thanks, their hopes and renewed confidence to the God who had delivered them and would yet make them great; having such a God, their future is not all behind them. They would use words of old association, yet would make them a "new song." Verses 1-3 are equivalent to a direction to use Psalm xviii., David's song of trust, up to the end of verse 5; only the beginning and end of the quotation are inserted; it would be filled out with names of honour for God, as in xviii. Then comes (4) a humble access in usual form, followed by sacrifice; 5-9 are original for the occasion, suiting the special circumstances; then (10-11) there is a direction to use Psalm lxii. down to its Selah (4); including a prostration (lxii. 3), and ending with a sacrifice. For the sacrifice a special ode is introduced (cxvi. 12-14). Next there is a quotation from lxxii. 12-14, which

would either suggest the thought of or direct the use of that psalm—a Messianic psalm of national glories yet to come. This is followed by an " alas," a humble access of the servant bowing down before the lord (16); followed by the final sacrifice in joy and confidence (17-19), and culminating in Halleluia. In the case of xl., a new portion (4-11) has been added to an older psalm, in the spirit of Isaiah i.; but part of the original psalm (13-17) has been used as a service complete in itself, and appears as lxx. The psalm in 1 Chron. xvi. is compiled out of cv., xcvi., cvi. A study of the later psalms shows that to a marked extent they drew upon quotations from earlier liturgies. Composite psalms were set down in our Prayer Book for such occasions as the commemoration of the martyrdom of Charles I. or the Restoration; these are quite in the spirit of the original use of the Psalms; they are now rather out of fashion, but are used in the S.P.G. book of daily services. Also, the authors did not only use matter written specially for worship, but worked into the services folk-songs, such as the shepherd song (xxiii.), songs of the captivity (cxxx.), and of the caravan route (cxx., cxxi.).

How the Psalm-Services were Rendered.—Our way of reading the Psalms simply as devotional poems, especially our Anglican plan of solemnly standing still and saying or singing them straight through, and dividing them into thirty half-sections which brings morning hymns for use in the evening and any special psalm just where it happens to come by day of the month, obscures the infinite variety of their structure and con-

tents. Their first worshippers rendered them with procession and movement (lxviii. 24-25; xlii. 4), with the contagion of a fervent crowd; with shout and trumpet-blast (xcv.); with very varied music (cxlix. 2, cl. 3-5, xxxiii. 2, lxxxi. 1-3; compare the great roll of musical instruments in Dan. iii. 5); with dancing and sword-waving (cxlviii. 3-6), and feasting (cxxxvi. 25); in "God's out-of-doors," looking up to the glorious firmament of Palestine, and amidst historic scenes. Sometimes it would be before a battle, with the enemy ready on the opposite hillside (xx., lvi.). Sometimes there would be a symbolical act, as when at Tabernacles the golden bowl full of water was brought up from Siloam and offered in the Temple. Sometimes the Ark was carried in exultant procession. We get descriptions of the setting of these services in the Psalms themselves, of young men and maidens, old men and children, praising the Lord with joy of heart and gesture. We get descriptions of them in the prophets who denounced their misuse (Amos v. 23). Read the account of David bringing up the Ark to Jerusalem (2 Sam. vi.); how Solomon dedicated the Temple (2 Chron. v.-vii.); how Ezra read the Law to the people, and they worshipped God with penitence and praise (Neh. viii.); how Nehemiah dedicated the hardly built walls of the restored city with triumphant services (Neh. xii.); how Elijah gathered the people to sacrifice on Carmel (1 Kings xviii.); and perhaps the fullest description of all, Ecclus. l. These show the Psalms in action, in their original setting; services that gripped and uplifted the very soul. It would do us no harm

to get back to the feelings that swept their souls, by understanding and imagination.

Much other variety within the Psalms will show as we proceed in our study of them. They contain odes and anthems for the trained choirs, benedictions for the priests, and ample share for the people to take—symbolical actions such as prostration and lustration; procession and dance; antiphons and litany-responses (cxv. 9-11, cxxxv. 18-19, cxxxvi.), and marching-songs (lxxxiv. 5), and choruses (cvii. 6, 13, 19, 28, lxvii. 3-5); and great shouts (cxviii. 15) and blasts of music, Selahs and Halleluias; doxologies (xli. 13, lxxii. 18-19, lxxxix. 52, cvi. 48); and short devotional cries of humility (xc. 13, cxvi. 16, cxviii. 25), of summons (iii. 6*b*, xx. 9, xxx. 10), of joy and trust (xcvii. 12, c. 1, civ. 35*c*, cxviii. 15-16, 29); sentences to accompany their symbolical acts (see Chapter IX.), and to hail the appearance of the sacrificial fire upon the altar (see Chapter XI.). Refrains were frequent (xlii. 5, 11, xliii. 5, xlvi. 7, 11, xlvii. 6, xlix. 12, 20, cxviii. 10-12). Also they probably memorised the liturgies most frequently used. It was by no means worship rendered for them, but by them and with them. (See Driver's arrangement of cxv., with parts assigned to priest, levite, choir, and congregation.) The titles of the Psalms, omitted in our P.Bk. version, give an idea of their variety; they were divided into the two great classes of "prayers" and "praises." (*Cf.* Jas. v. 13, "Is any among you afflicted? Let him pray. Is any merry? Let him sing praises." The whole range of worship is indicated.) But there are at least

a dozen other titles used; some indicate the kind of musical setting appropriate for the service: "on the flute," which meant gladness; "for the female choir." Others indicate the aim and contents of the service: *maskils* for great festivals, provided with choruses or refrains for the people; *todhah*, thanksgivings; *tephillah*, penitentials; *le-ani*, "for an afflicted one."

Hebrew Psalms not in the Psalter.—We must not forget the Hebrew songs not included in the collection made for liturgical use in the Temple at Jerusalem. There is the song of Exod. xv. after the passing of the Red Sea; a psalm put into the mouth of Balaam (Num. xxiv.); the song of Moses (Deut. xxxii.); the vivid song after battle by Deborah and Barak (Judg. v.); Hannah's song, so like the *Magnificat* (1 Sam. ii.); the refrain sung by the rejoicing women of Israel after the killing of Goliath; "with singing and joy, with tabrets and harps and instrument of music, they answered one another as they played" (1 Sam. xviii. 6-7). There is David's thanksgiving (1 Chron. xxix.), and his lament over Saul and Jonathan (2 Sam. i.), and his last words (2 Sam. xxiii.); the psalms and prayers at the dedication of the Temple (1 Kings viii.; 2 Chron. v.); the prose psalm in Neh. ix.; two songs put forth by Isaiah (xii. and xxvi.); the thanksgiving of Hezekiah after his sickness (Isa. xxxviii.); the prayer of Jonah (ii.), and of Habakkuk (iii.); and in the Apocrypha the *Benedicite*, and the praise-song of Ecclus. l. Finally came the great Christian psalms, *Magnificat* and *Nunc Dimittis* and the *Te Deum*, the doxology to the Lord's Prayer, and the *Gloria*.

Thus the Psalter reflects the soul of a nation learning God's lessons through all the stirring times of at least a thousand years—a longer period than in our own history has elapsed since the Norman Conquest. It offered, as we shall see, a simple, flexible, liturgical framework, that made it possible to retain the old and treasured, yet bring into use new adaptations and enrichments. It set itself to comfort the afflicted, to nerve the timid, to confirm the doubter, to instruct the young. It linked all the occasions of life with God —sickness and death, marriage and the birth of children, special emergencies and deliverances, harvest and vintage and shepherding, pilgrim journeys, war and peace, the life of the country, the village and the city. The Psalms are not historical poems composed after particular occasions, but orders of service suitable for all such occasions as were constantly recurring, and reflecting moods constantly felt—hope, despair, confidence, courage, loyalty, patience, the sting of guilt and the joy of assurance of pardon. We can in imagination stand among the worshippers on each occasion, feel the throb of their hearts, and watch the fire of their passion and faith.

CHAPTER III

LOSSES AND GAINS IN TRANSLATION

No translation can be exact; something must be missed. Losses through difficulties of the text; through lack of intimate knowledge of the country of origin; through failure to study as orders of service. Actual gains through mistranslation; little Christian poems inserted where the text was unintelligible; Christian thought read into the Psalms by translators, especially deepening passages of penitence; use of words like "soul," "salvation," with Christian connotation.

Losses to be retrieved by knowledge of life, climate, and scenery of Palestine. Illustrations; spring—the "former rains"; summer—the value of water, sirocco, whirlwinds, harvest; autumn—storm-poetry. Expressions of joy feebly rendered in our translations.

NO translation exactly reproduces its original. No race fully understands the thought of another, nor can put it exactly into a different language. Melanesia can furnish an example that the way of the translator is hard. The verse under consideration was civ. 11, "the wild asses quench their thirst." It could not remain asses: pigs were the only animals known in the islands: in Melanesia we "err and stray like lost pigs." But they did not wish to say merely "wild pigs drink." So they asked their converts, Can you give us a rather unusual word for pigs —something special and out of the common? Certainly: the word was supplied. Then the same process with "drink." And with fuller knowledge of

the language they found they had achieved this priceless translation, "the man-eating pig drinks to stop the hiccoughs"!

An even greater difficulty is to find or coin a native word for an idea that is quite new to them. Archdeacon Comins of Melanesia related how they tried to get some word with at least the germ of the idea of "forgive" in it, for the translation of the Lord's Prayer. A chief was interrogated as follows: "Suppose you had a great enemy." (Certainly: this was quite easy.) "Suppose one day you met him in the bush, and you had your spear and he had nothing." (This was easy: the chief's eyes gleamed.) "You were just going to stick him—he was quite helpless—when suddenly a feeling came over you, you dropped your spear, you greeted him as a friend—now, what would you call that?" "I would call it utter foolishness," came the decided reply. So an entirely new word had to be invented to represent "forgive." In any translation something will be missed that perhaps meant much to the original people: something will be read into the poetry that means much to the translating race. This will be the more so when dealing with subjects that go deep into the realm of heart and soul, especially with religion: where ideas and aspirations can but be adumbrated, not precisely expressed. It has been so with English versions of the Psalms. We have lost something by failure to understand. We have gained something by reading into them ideas they did not express. For a simple example, the phrase "the beauty of holiness" is not in the original Psalms, but

neither is " or ever your pots be made hot with thorns." It is worth while to count some of these gains, and repair some of these losses.

Besides the fundamental impossibility of accurate reproduction, there are other causes that have affected our translations of the Psalms. The text is often difficult: there are archaic words, and words of unknown significance; there are passages that as they stand make no intelligible meaning. There is one interesting example where a scribe worked from defaced and smudged manuscripts: he would preserve every word he could decipher; when he could read no more he wrote " ends," " does not go on " (lxxxviii. 8) and " darkness "—too smudged to read (lxxxviii. 18). Each of these occurs in the middle of a sentence. But this textual difficulty is a minor matter that affects but little of the whole Psalter. Our chief misunderstanding has come from failure to read the Psalms as liturgical orders of service, fitting them into the background of such descriptions of worship as are fully given in 2 Sam. vi. (David bringing up the Ark to Jerusalem), 2 Chron. vi.-vii. (the Dedication of the Temple), and Ecclus. l. There is much also to be gained by a knowledge of Palestinian landscape and life of today, for the Psalms vividly reflect the customs of daily life and the scenery of the land: the translator, for instance, who thinks in terms of a European storm is likely to miss something of a simile taken from the burning sirocco. Our chief gains have come from reading Christian thought and hope into the Psalms. The Apostles began it when they filled Messianic passages

full of the life of Jesus. Translators such as St. Jerome, and those of our own A.V., put headings to the Psalms giving them Christian interpretations. Translators of the Psalms into Christian hymns are the supreme example of this. Christians in all ages have continued it when they found in the Psalms just the words that suited their deepest needs, both in the emergencies of outward life and in the adventures of the soul. But this enrichment has brought also its loss of understanding. It has put infinitely deeper meaning into the expressions of contrition (Chapter X., p. 139). It has interpreted battle descriptions as applying to the spiritual combat. But there is in the Psalms singularly little about the welfare of " the soul " of a man, or of a man apart from his Church and nation, or about a man's private approach to God. These are what a Christian reader now chiefly finds in the Psalms: he reads them as an *Imitatio Christi* produced before Christ, fulfilled in meaning by Christ. We read as personal heart-cries what were meant as great national and corporate utterances. But there could not, perhaps, be two books more different in tone than the Psalms and the *Imitatio Christi*. In the Psalms the atmosphere is of the full national life, the court, the camp, the farm, the market-place, the battlefield—not of the prie-dieu in the cloister, of aspiration for personal perfection and salvation; the voices we hear are not those of men retired from the world, aiming at detachment and mortification: there is the voice of the priest-teacher, but also of the prophet-statesman, even of the troop-commander rousing fierceness and faith for the charge

he is just about to lead.* It brings both gain and loss if we take a liturgy composed for use just before a battle, and read it as if it were the meditation of the child Samuel when hushed was the evening hymn and the lights burned low in silent tabernacle courts.

Gains from Mistranslation.

Where the Text is Unintelligible.—There are places where, as we have seen, the translators were completely astray, and as a result they have given us original and sometimes precious little Christian poems or epigrams. The best example is lxxxiv. (Chapter I.). G. F. Watts has told us that he often got inspirations for his pictures from chance smudges or shadows on walls; it would be as unreasonable to refuse these psalm-pictures suggested by a blurred passage as to regret the Watts picture and demand the smudge. Of the two scribes' phrases in lxxxviii. (p. 56), the translators have turned "ends, does not go on" into "I am so fast in prison that I cannot get forth" (8), and the word "darkness" (preceded by "acquaintance") into "thou hast hid mine acquaintance out of my sight." In lv. 20 there occurs a line of prose linking up two psalms of defence against magic; it says, "In case they change not, and fear not God." The previous verses have used the name of God "Elohim": the latter use "Jehovah": a naive recommendation—if one fails, try the other! Our translators work it into the poetry, A.V. in one way, P.Bk. in another, as a reason for the

* The officer who cried in the trenches "Now, boys, let's give them hell" was literally near the words and thought of some psalms.

downfall of the wicked, "for they will not change nor fear God." Lxxiii. 10 is a puzzling verse; the passage is speaking of the violent enemy: "They fall in no misfortune like other men. Therefore they are full of pride; they utter swelling words." Wellhausen carries it on in that sense: "yet are they sated with wickedness, and water stands ready for them in abundance." Peters takes it as a parenthesis referring to the restoration of Israel: "therefore He will bring back His people hither, when the fulness of their days is found." The A.V. and the R.V. are not happy in it: the P.Bk. boldly makes a verse that we would not lose: "Therefore fall the people unto them, and thereout suck they no small advantage." The Vulgate has another rendering: "Ideo convertetur populus meus hic, et dies pleni invenientur in eis." Driver has yet another, and the French version is different again: "C'est pourquoi le peuple de Dieu tombe dans le doute, et cela leur est un breuvage très amer." And Luther's version gives yet another meaning. It would be interesting to know how this verse appears in Swahili or Japanese, and to follow it through the hundreds of versions in which the British and Foreign Bible Society has published the Psalms. Obviously the text throws on each translator the task of making his own little poem of it. Lviii. 9 has been another puzzle. It occurs in a series of elaborate ill-wishes for the enemy: let them "be vile as refuse-water that dribbleth" (7) and melt like wax. Then the illustration is taken from the piles of thorns gathered for fuel and the rush of a whirlwind: "before their thorns have seen the pot, let Him whirl them away,

green and dry alike"—may they be as helpless as a pile of thorn-fuel struck by a whirlwind. "Green" suggests to most translators "living": our P.Bk. gives us this original and vivid phrase: "So let indignation vex him, even as a thing that is raw." What can annoy worse than a green sore? One of the most beautiful of gains is cxxvii. 2. The Hebrew words are unintelligible, says Wellhausen: the P.Bk. translators have enriched us with "He giveth His beloved sleep" (on which Mrs. Browning wrote a poem). They were not often content with a rounded phrase of no particular meaning; perhaps they were so in "the dew of thy birth is of the womb of the morning" (cx. 3; see p. 259), and in "let not their precious balms break my head" (cxli. 5), the only meaning I ever heard for which was its prompt and witty quotation in an Irish Synod when a snuff-box fell from the gallery. The original is a statement that the faithful worshipper has not dallied with idolatry, "nor does the oil of the godless sleek my head."

Christian Thought Read into the Translations.—We do not refer here to such a substitution as "Christ" for "Anointed One," to the headings affixed to the Psalms, or to the interpretation given in devotional commentaries. The Vulgate did this (see, for instance, the heading prefixed to xxii. and lxviii., and such notes as were appended to the French version of the Psalms in the "Manuel du Chrétien," with the imprimatur of the Archbishop of Tours, 1870). Our own A.V. more restrainedly applied them to Christ (*cf.* headings to xlv., "The majesty and grace of Christ's Kingdom,"

and cx., "The kingdom, the priesthood, the conquest, and the passion of Christ"), as it did the Prophets. Men translating them in such a mood would inevitably put into their phrases something more than was meant by their originators: not changing them deliberately, but "fulfilling" their meaning as Christ was to them the "pleroma" of all knowledge, aspiration and hope. For instance, "God of our salvation" means to us much more than "God who gives victory and deliverance to our nation"; so, too, with the word "Redeemer": these occur constantly. "Worship in the beauty of holiness" has gone far beyond its original meaning of "worship in holy apparel." These are legitimate developments, and we prize them the more from seeing their origin. Those cries of ill-wish towards enemies, in which not only the Psalms but a spiritual prophet like Jeremiah abound, have sometimes been taken literally; cxxxvii. has been used as a command for Christian soldiers to give no quarter in battle: "Happy he that dasheth thy children against the stones." But on the whole they have been given an ethical meaning instead of a merely national or personal vindictiveness; when we read of the ungodly, the proud, the haughty, those that trust in lies and deceit, the brute and the fool, we apply them to qualities that are enemies of the soul, as a warning to ourselves of spiritual dangers rather than as a denunciation of others. It has needed Christian insight to realise that man's chief danger is not his enemies' attack, but his own deterioration. Our worst fate when faced by brutal foes is to become like them.

So in cxx. 2, "deliver my soul from lying lips," meant to the writer "defend me from enemy liars"; we read it, "defend me from becoming a liar." So too the poor and needy, the humble, God's people, are for us an ethical, not a national, class; implying a duty rather than a privilege; and the translators' language has insensibly framed itself to suit this interpretation. Christian longings for unity, so sorely learnt by centuries of still unhealed division, are read into phrases like cxxxii. 1: "Is it not happy for all of us pilgrims from all quarters to be here together for our festival?" We say more than this in our translation: "Behold how joyful a thing it is to dwell together in unity." So it is with cxxii. 3: Jerusalem, cries the pilgrim from Babylon, is a compact city—how different from huge straggling Babylon with its suburbs stretching to a twenty-mile radius within its walls! Read Herodotus' description of Babylon (i. 178-184).

There is little need for us today to hear denunciations of actual idolatry and magic: it is all to the good that phrases describing idol-worshippers should read to us as warnings against lies, deceit, and crafty wickedness. Perhaps the fullest enrichment with new thought is found in the passages of humble access to God in contrition. The ethical and spiritual feeling of guilt, of personal as well as corporate offence against God, of righteousness and mercy as the true worship of Him, was by no means absent. But (*cf.* Chapter X.) it was far from reaching the standard demanded by Jesus, and His followers in translating the Psalms have deepened and emphasised the spiritual note.

A few examples may be given as illustrations: lix. 5, "them that offend of malicious wickedness" means more than the literal "traitorous idolaters"; lxiii. 11, "the mouth of them that speak lies shall be stopped" represents "the mouth of idolaters"; lxvi. 7, spoken of enemy nations, "God's eyes spy out the heathen: the adversary doth not exalt himself," becomes a pronouncement for all men's guidance. "His eyes behold the people: such as will not believe shall not be able to exalt themselves." Xiv. 1, "The fool hath said in his heart, 'There is no God'" is very different from "The foolish nation says 'The God of Israel is not what they think Him,'" in the tone of Rabshakeh's taunts in Isaiah. "Man did eat angels' food" (lxxviii. 25) is more than "food of the mighty," and often appears in meditations about the Eucharist. "I am utterly purposed that my mouth shall not offend" (xvi. 3) goes beyond the self-justifying "Thou findest no harlotry in me." "Yea, I have delivered him that without any cause is mine enemy" (vii. 4) has read the Sermon on the Mount into "if I have spoiled my enemy without cause."

The whole tenor of vi.—a liturgy for the sick—has been changed by the use of the word "soul," so that we read it of spiritual instead of bodily sufferings: instead of "all of me is vexed sore" (3) and "deliver my life" (4), we have "My soul is sore troubled: deliver my soul." See also the spiritualising effect of the use of "soul" for "life" in cxxi. 7, lxxiv. 19, xliv. 25. The use of "soul" with all that Christian devotional feeling attaches to it has lifted the thought

of the Psalms to a different plane. The Jew did not think of the soul as a separate and supreme part of a man, with interests often clashing with, always overriding, those of the body : interests calculated in view of an eternal existence, and a final perfection in which even its Creator can rejoice and boast himself (John xv. 8, xvii. 10). The ascetic theology we find in the Psalms is our own enrichment of them. The Jew had some idea that suffering could be valuable discipline (though far short of the Christian conception of joyful acceptance of suffering, of "filling up the sufferings of Christ") : but he had only feebly approached the thought that prosperity may be a supreme danger to the soul. The translators knew what the original writers did not, and so have enabled us to find their knowledge in our psalm-versions.

Losses by Mistranslation.

Abruptness of Language and Thought.—Our losses are far less than our gains : yet there is no reason why we should submit to them. They are chiefly losses in vividness, and can be redeemed by further knowledge of the life, customs, and scenery of Palestine (the Psalms were very human, very close to life and nature), and by more understanding of, and imagination of, these great liturgies as they were enacted in worship, and by realising that like other Eastern poetry they are full of abrupt transitions, narrative, soliloquy, dramatic address by God to the worshipper, or by the worshipper to the enemy nations, swiftly inter-

mingling. This matter of abrupt transitions is often pointed out by commentators (as in ii.), but its difficulty is accentuated if we read the Psalms as continuous poems instead of orders of service; often the transitions are liturgical, not merely mental. It is much more natural to find, for example, the "prayer of humble access" and the *Gloria in Excelsis* in one liturgy than in one hymn. In cxviii. 25, in the midst of a triumphal passage, there is a sudden transition to "Alas, Lord, save now; alas, Lord, deliver now"; it is for use at the moment of "humble access" that must have its place even in the most joyful liturgy (compare cxvi. 16). Even in a service with a climax of joy, such as xxx., the worshipper is led through a penitential stage, accompanying acts of prostration and appeal to God and dependence: and a predominantly penitential liturgy would culminate in a praise-cry of assurance, as in xxxi. This will be shown in chapters dealing with the succession of stages through which a Jewish liturgy led its worshippers (Chapters VI. to XII.). It should also be noted that the rounded language of our P.Bk. version, intended for singing, and written at a time when English was at its best and freshest, is not always a good representation of the abrupt, staccato Hebrew phrases and irregular metres. This is especially true of the "How longs" and "Alases." Cxxxvii., perhaps, gains in Peters's translation: "By the river of Babylon, there we sat, yea, we wept, when we remembered Zion. For there they asked us, our captors, for words of song, and our plunderers for mirth: 'Sing us some song of Zion.'"

George Herbert's poetry, in form and substance, is perhaps the nearest kin in English to the Psalms.

Illustration by the Holy Land.—The longer one lives in Palestine, the more one finds the Holy Land an illustration and interpreter of the Holy Book. It is true that no building remains that was entered by our Lord, still less by the psalmist. But the Bible is an open-air book, and a book of the life of the people: and the hillsides and valleys, the birds, the fields, the lake-shores and the wadys, remain as when He walked there: the march of the seasons still brings out and burns up the flowers and herbage; and the hot sirocco and the raging storms are there as reflected in the Psalms. Moreover, the daily life of the people is singularly unchanged, especially that of the country and village folk; and not only the Psalms but the Prophets and the Gospels gain vividness by being read in their home setting. Our translators since Jerome have been, on the whole, without personal knowledge of Palestine, and it may be of interest to show some places in which they have rather missed the point for that reason and enfeebled their original. The number of instances that might be given is large. Lest our treatment of this topic should become a mere string of references, it will be better to take a few typical examples and quote fully the literal translations; and in an appendix will be given a more complete list, for those who care to follow up the fascinating subject of the reflection in the Psalms of the life, scenery, and customs of the Holy Land.

Illustration of the Climate and the Seasons.—Xc. ("Lord,

Thou hast been our refuge") is a psalm of new hope for Israel's destiny after the desolation of the Exile. The whole foundation of this hope is that their God is irresistibly mighty, and that He has not cast them off nor revoked His promises to their nation. To justify their hopes in the face of facts, they must believe that this mighty God deals with man not in caprice, not merely doing His best for them as they go along, but on broad, unchanging, purposeful plans; and the best illustration of this is, the way God deals with the earth by seasons. They must abandon their former fretfulness under God's discipline, their envious heart-searchings about the prosperity of the heathen nations; they must be able to sum up their history as a schooling for their salutary development worked out by a God with purposes of love. It is this new calmness of faith and joy of hope that appears beautifully in the group of Restoration psalms called "The Prayer of Moses" (xc.-xcix.); one can see why they became favourite psalms with the early Christians, who fitted to them the glorious doxology and interpretation given in Revelation xv. 3-4, and made them "the Song of Moses and of the Lamb."

In xc. the proof given of the might of God is, as so often, the creation; not merely that He created the world, but that He is the unchanging God behind all changes and developments, such a God as does not change His purpose, and cannot conceivably be baulked in it. Verse 2 is a picture of creation: "Before the mountains were brought forth, and the earth and the world were in travail, from everlasting to ever-

lasting Thou art God." Verse 3 is a summary of what human history must be under such a God: "Thou turnest man to contrition" (P.Bk. has "destruction"); and sayest, "Turn, ye children of men." Next is a vivid picture of the desolation God sends by winter upon the land, type of the desolation He sends for discipline upon man: "Thou hast flooded them [the mountains]; they became a waste," as Palestine becomes under the battering of its winter storms. Our P.Bk. version substitutes a different though beautiful simile, applying it to man: "As soon as Thou scatterest them they are even as a sleep." The remainder of the psalm elaborates these themes, pointing the practical moral: "So teach us to number our days that we may get us an heart of wisdom" (12).

In our land of ever-flowing rivers it is not easy for us to realise the illustrations drawn from the "wadys," the deep-cut river-beds of hilly Palestine that only flow after storms; our picture of "cool Siloam's shady rill" is almost laughably different from the reality. During the months of summer these wadys are scorched and dry and silent; later they become fertilising streams, and dash their waters and roll and grind their boulders with great din. Hence in cxxvi. 4 the prayer for restoration, "Bring back, O Lord, our captivity, like torrents in the South-land," make our future as different from our present as those dusty ravines around Beersheba become after the rains. The Psalms are full of reference to the idea that finds most complete expression in the *Benedicite*, that all earth's noises are its voices of worship to God; the

streams that "lift up their voice, lift up their din" (xciii. 3) are these flooded storm-channels, with their cascades and grinding boulders.

Spring and Summer.—The chief illustration drawn from spring is the almost magical change from desolation to verdure, and the equally quick parching of its life. The Psalms fall far short of the lesson that Jesus drew from the lilies of the field, and employ this simile as a rather plaintive appeal that an unchanging God should not be too hard in discipline upon so transitory a being as man; the illustration from the quickly shrivelling herbage is more vivid that our English pasture enables us to understand. After spring comes the burning summer and the ripening harvest and vintage. Three points may be taken for illustration, where fuller knowledge of the Holy Land lends vividness to the meaning: the value of water in a dry land, the prevalence of the "sirocco," and the whirlwinds of Palestine.

The Value of Water.—The Jews were very practical in water conservation and the making of cisterns, but they never became independent of the annual anxiety about the amount of their rains and the flow of their springs, and they thought of water as a direct and precious gift from God, the harvest as His bounty, the drought as His means of discipline. In the independent account of creation given in civ., we see the Jewish belief that there are three great bodies of water at the disposal of God. "He founded the earth in its place, unmoved for ever and aye. With the deep as with a robe Thou coveredst it; on the mountains

the waters stand" ; earth was wrapped with the waters of chaos (5-6). Then comes the dramatic creative act, when to the thunder of the Almighty the earth emerges and the waters are divided into their three divisions: "At Thy rebuke they flee, at the voice of Thy thunder they scatter; mountains rise, valleys sink, to the place that Thou didst appoint them" (7-8). There are the "waters under the earth," the "water-depths" (lxix. 14), the "great deep," of which the "great sea" in Solomon's Temple was probably a symbol. There are the waters on the earth, its seas and rivers; to them God "set their bounds," "gathering as in a flask the waters of the sea, storing in treasure-houses the deeps" (xxxiii. 7; P.Bk. has "as it were upon an heap" instead of the picture of the seas in God's flask which He can shake or still as He pleases). Finally, there are the "waters above the earth," "above the firmament" His "heavenly river," above which is His heavenly palace, whose "beams He has laid in its waters" (civ. 3).

God deals directly with each of these treasure-houses of the water that man must have or die; from them, as part of His dealings with man, God sends His gifts in bounty or His terrors in discipline. The psalms of Dan, as we shall see (Chapter XV.), are full of the terror caused when the solid earth quivers at the tossings of the underground deep, or trembles in morasses such as are formed round the Waters of Merom. But no gift of His bounty is greater than when God brings this underground water forth for man by springs, which are His direct gift, and a symbol

of the Divine life and presence; they are "living water"; it was from this source that Ezekiel's river of hope was to be given forth (Ezek. xlvii.). A water-supply for Jerusalem even today is practically impossible without reliance upon its springs; these are life or death to it; it could not live upon its rainfall given from the "waters that are above the earth," nor by its River Jordan running at the bottom of a great cleft nearly 4,000 feet below the city. So the Psalms are full of ecstatic expressions about God's gift of springs: "All my fresh springs are in Thee" has a meaning far stronger than we would attach to it until we put ourselves out of English into Palestinian surroundings (lxxxvii. 6); "the river of Thy delights watereth Israel, for with Thee is the fountain of life" (xxxvi. 8-9). God's crowning mercy in the wilderness was to allow Moses to strike through the desert rock into the precious store below, "giving them drink in abundance like the deeps" (lxxviii. 15). The goodliness of the Chosen Land that He promised to Abraham was that, while He desolated the apparently fruitful Jordan valley which Lot chose, He "made a wilderness [the barren Judean hills] water-pools, and dry ground springs of water," and led hungry Israel to dwell there in prosperity (cv. 35). Nor is it only man who thus receives life from God: "He sendeth forth springs in the valleys; between mountains they flow; they give drink to all beasts of the field, wild asses quench their thirst. By them dwell the fowl of heaven, among the boughs they give song" (civ. 10-12).

God deals directly also with the "waters that are

in the earth." This subject may be left to the appendix; we understand more about seas and rivers, and our translations have missed less of the idea of the Hebrew. With the "waters that are above the earth" God also, in Hebrew thought, dealt directly; His loving use of them took the form of dew, of cooling clouds and fertilising rain; when He used them for discipline, He sent forth from them the ravaging storm, hail and frost and snow. Palestine has a rainless scorching summer of six or seven months; and the dew, like the springs, assumes an importance that we can hardly realise in our showery climate. The dews come down upon Palestine's baked plateau from the mountain of Hermon, and they were felt to be the direct gift of the God who, as the psalms of Dan show (Chapter XV.), was specially associated with Hermon. So we get the simile in cxxxii. 3; for us pilgrims to be back from Babylon in our homeland is refreshment and life direct from God, "like the night-mist of Hermon that goeth down on the mountain of Zion"; we get also the beautiful prophetic expression of Israel's world-function, "ye shall be among many nations as a dew from the Lord" (Micah v. 7). It was not only at the creation, but for months of every year, that God "did not cause it to rain upon the earth, but there went up a mist and watered the whole face of the ground" (Gen. ii. 5-6). Every summer taught its lesson of happy dependence upon a God who was loving yet resolute in discipline.

One feature of the summer is the *sirocco*. References to the east wind are frequent, and mean the sirocco.

Nothing could be more vivid to one who knows those oppressive days and nights than xxxii. 4: "Thy hand is heavy upon me day and night: inert I become as by summer sirocco." It is a wind blowing from the vast deserts, bitter cold and raging in winter, when it breaks even the long-voyage ships, the ships of Tarshish (xlviii. 7); burning hot in summer; "on the wicked God rains coals of fire, brimstone and burning wind" (xi. 6). In this as in many respects Australians can specially appreciate the psalm reflections of climate and scenery. If New South Wales readers will picture Jerusalem as situated like Leura on the Blue Mountains, and think what a "westerly" means in summer and in winter, they are near the reality. Palestine is literally between the devil and the deep sea; when the sea prevails, the summer is tempered with the daily cooling breezes and massed clouds; when the desert prevails, it is a fit simile for the blasts of the devil withering the soul by sirocco. Let anyone who with the British Army spent two years in the desert south of Palestine think how much meaning there was for the Jewish caravans in lxxviii. 26: "God led forth the sirocco"; and for the pilgrim cortege that had lost its way in cvii. 4-5, "they went astray in the waterless wilderness; hungry, yea, thirsty, their soul within them fainteth." A vivid illustration may be found in the account how the horrors of that very route broke down the discipline of Bonaparte's army attacking Palestine in 1799.

Palestine in summer is also a land of whirlwinds and "dust-devils." The psalmist was saying something

really unpleasant when he wished his enemy to be like chaff before the whirlwind (xxxv. 6, lxxxiii. 13), or when he asked God to "fill their bellies with His blast" (xvii. 14). I have seen as many as a dozen at once twisting up almost out of sight in the Jordan valley, when the army had trampled that powdery soil to dust; one realised what a helplessness the psalmist was invoking for his enemies in lviii. 9, "may you be like a pile of thorn-fuel struck by a whirlwind," on seeing a staff-officer's tent and papers scattered from his frantic clutches by a Jordan valley dust-devil. On another occasion the Rev. Wilson Cash and I were travelling in Transjordania and had the unsavoury experience of being caught by a whirlwind just as we were passing over a village rubbish-heap that had been accumulating and ripening for centuries. One felt choked and blinded and utterly helpless.

Harvest in Palestine comes in summer, not autumn, a festive, social, happy time, with land and people alike at their best. The Jews' expectations of a golden age yet to come are often expressed in terms of good harvests, as in the Messianic Psalm lxxii. 16: "Be grain abundant in the land, on the mountain-tops its fruit shake, while cities bloom like grass of the earth." Lxv. is a beautiful psalm for the offering of the first-fruits to God; verses 9-13 give a delightful picture of harvest; they gain by literal translation, and especially by being read in Samaria, where this psalm belongs; the description most accurately fits the scene there. "Thou didst visit the land and water it, greatly Thou

enrichedst it; (God's river is full of water)." Samaria has no earthly river; its ripe harvest-time is brought on by God's river in the firmament; it is His gift. "Thou preparest their corn. For thus Thou preparest it: her furrows watering, her ridges smoothing, with showers Thou softenest her, her sprouting Thou blessest. Thou hast crowned the year with Thy goodness, and Thy chariot-wheels drop fatness." Here we see those rounded, terraced hill-tops, one smoothed ridge above another, step above step of golden grain that cannot ripen unless the "latter rains" water the furrows; all the fatness comes from the clouds, God's chariot-wheels. It is a feature of Palestine, how closely the good land adjoins the weird hilly desolations of the wilderness; but in the spring even these show pasture. I remember how in the spring of 1917 the Anzac cavalrymen, land-men all, pointed out what a lot of feed there was for sheep even in the ghastly hills above Jericho. So this psalm follows the harvest from the "hills that are girt with joy," down to the flats and wadys that pass into wilderness; "wilderness pastures run over; the meadows are clad with flocks (beyond the limit where crops can grow); and the valleys clothed with grain"—even the bottoms of the wadys.

The Autumn Storms: the "Former Rains." — With autumn the long drought breaks, at the coming of the first storms, and there is nothing in nature-poetry grander than the description of these storms in the Psalms. Palestine is an echoing and resounding land: the noise of a modern battle amongst its hills was

positively infernal, and the thunder-crashes of its storms re-echo round its rock-walled wadys. To follow the poetical descriptions accurately, we must remember that the writer believed the cosmology we have already described about the waters above and below the earth, and we must notice that sometimes he follows the track of the storm in the heavens, sometimes its track on earth as it passed north to south down Palestine, or rolls out to sea.

In xviii. 7-15 there is a magnificent picture of the dark brewing and bursting of a Palestinian storm, figuring the swoop of the mighty God to rescue Israel. "Earth quivered, the pillars of heaven staggered and tottered; He bowed the heavens and came down, swooping on wings of the wind; and made darkness about Him a covert, masses of waters, dense mist of clouds; from the brightness before Him coals of fire kindled, . . . at the blast of the breath of Thy nostrils." Many psalms illustrate this overpowering sense of the swooping of God, for rescue or for judgment, figured by the storm; God who makes the whistling wind His angel, the flaming lightning His minister (civ. 4). The awe of man and of the earth at His approach is expressed in lxxvii. 16-19: "The waters saw Thee, O God, they writhe; the storm-clouds gave voice; the earth quaked and trembled," and then the storm passes off to sea, where "His footsteps are not known." That hush of stillness which sometimes precedes the striking of the storm-gale is often noticed, as in lxxvi. 7-9: "Awful art Thou, O God; who standeth before Thee what time Thou

art wroth? From heaven Thou gavest sentence; earth feared, and was still." In xxix. there is a picture of which we miss something unless we notice how accurately it follows the very course of such a storm through Palestine; this above all such descriptions needs full quotation and literal translation.

The voice of the Lord on the waters! the Lord on great waters! (The noise begins with the distant roll of storm on the great heavenly sea above the clouds.)

The voice of the Lord with might! The voice of the Lord with splendour! (Then the storm reaches earth, and breaks upon Lebanon and Hermon, here called by a local name Sirion.)

The voice of the Lord breaking cedars! The Lord hath broken cedars of Lebanon. He maketh Lebanon skip like a bull, and Sirion like a wild ox; (their trees tossing like their scattering herds. Down to the South it passes, to the deserts of Kadesh, terrifying its gazelles.)

The voice of the Lord cleaving flames of fire! The voice of the Lord whirleth the desert, the desert of Kadesh. The voice of the Lord maketh hinds travail.

It is all God; there is no power but His; He "sat enthroned at the Flood" (Driver on verse 10). Let man humble himself; but if he fears God, he need fear nothing else. So the psalm ends with the beautiful picture of peace in His Temple while the storm rages by (9): "the while He strippeth the forests, in His Temple all cry Glory."

Expressions of Joy in the Psalms.—There is one loss in translation which is surely strange if Christianity is a religion of joy. The Hebrew expressions of joy find a distinctly feebler rendering in English. "Lift up your voice," "sing," "rejoice," "the voice of joy and praise," are thin compared with "shout the joy-cry," or the phrase Driver repeatedly uses, "ring out my joy"; or "the noise of shouts and praises,

a multitude in the jubilant festival march" (Wellhausen, xlii. 5); or the exultation of xlvii. 5-7: "God is gone up with a shout, the Lord with peal of trumpets. Chant unto God, chant ye!" The *Venite* begins, "Come, let us shout unto the Lord, with trumpet-blast to the God of our salvation." Nor have we suffered loss only in the words of our translation, but also in the use we make of the Psalms, especially we Anglicans. If ever any people set themselves to take the fire out of a thing, to lose all the variety, we are they in our use of the Psalms. Except in our best churches, psalm-chanting by a congregation resembles a hurdle-race, with half the people taking no share, just waiting till it is over. We have used the Psalms chiefly as diamond-mines, to extract from them favourite texts, which have passed into most men's thinking. They are that, and more.

May we not some day join in a Psalm of David rendered as it was by David's people in David's city, part by part, in actual and devotional procession; with Christian hymns fulfilling its thought at each stage, while Christian hearts accept its inspired course of devotional discipline on the way to the altar of our joy and gladness? Psalm lxxxiv. is a close parallel to a devotional procession round Westminster Abbey. There, too, we face the fact of death; there, too, we are reminded of national triumphs given to us in times past by the God whose arm is not shortened that He cannot save. Could we not make David's use of this glorious procession-path, on our way to the altar of the God who is the same yesterday, today, and for ever?

CHAPTER IV

THE SOIL OF THE GARDEN

Psalmody as a method of liturgical worship did not originate with Israel; it was a Semitic heritage, highly developed before Abraham. A flexible framework, adaptable to express new truth. Jewish centres of psalm-development:—the home of the Ark; Samuel; David. After the division of the kingdom, four centres; Jerusalem, Gerizim, Dan, and Bethel. Hebrew and Semitic psalmody alike in form, very different in spirit. Examples: Elijah on Carmel; sacrifices for unwitting sin; counter-charm liturgies.

THE Psalms are to us much more than a subject of study for original meanings. They are the inexhaustible treasury of Christian meanings also; the flower of religious poetry; the garden of the soul. It will be of interest to see the soil from which psalmody sprang. For this method of liturgical approach to God did not originate with the Jews. The Psalms were the flowers they grew in the soil: these are their own gift to the religion of mankind.

Long before the day of Abraham, there was a race-stock with a developed culture and civilisation from which he sprang. It occupied an area between the Persian mountains and the Mediterranean. It had passed out of the primitive stage: had already selected and absorbed things from other civilisations: it had thought its way and felt its way towards points of view about life and religion: it had a highly developed code of laws, and the beginnings of art, sculpture, archi-

tecture, science, mathematics, engineering, and music. In religion it had worked out a type and method of worship, a general way for man's approach to the Invisible. This had long passed the stage of being crude and extempore: it was settled, but was excellently flexible and adaptable. It centred in sacrifice: it had its recognised use for the names of the gods, its recognised sequence of acts the worshipper should do, to be in the uplifted mood at great moments: as he went through court after court to the final shrine, so he passed through one induced mood after another—penitence, awe, exaltation, a deepened sense of "the numinous." It used music, chanting, litany, responses, odes, choruses, anthems, ejaculations; had ritual and ceremonial and symbolical action; it compiled books collecting valued hymns, and adapted them to new cities, new shrines, new gods.

From this stock the children of Abraham broke off under the compelling impulse of a new belief about God. This new belief was not merely a modification: it implied a fundamental and revolutionary change of the whole outlook upon life and God. Whatever might be carried forward from the old religion, the new religion would be fundamentally different: it would grow quite new flowers in the old soil. The children of Abraham did not drop the old framework of worship. Why should they? It was good, practical, sensible; it could be readily adapted to their new and higher knowledge of God. In their more primitive stages in Palestine, they would not be using the elaborate worship-scheme of Babylonian temples,

but, so far as they needed forms, these were ready to their memory, traditional to their race—the altar, sacrifice, the shout of summons, the answer of God by fire. When they settled, and had shrines for national and congregational worship, they did not imitate the Babylonians, but drew on the common ancestral heritage. Babylonian liturgies survive in great number and variety, dating from before 2000 B.C.; the resemblances to Hebrew liturgies and worship are close.

The more elaborate national worship of Israel developed at the Ark-centre, wherever that might at the time be. The sacking of Shiloh and the loss of the Ark for a period, and all the unsettlements of the times of the Judges, must have been very disturbing to the development of worship. Samuel began to restore order with his "schools of the sons of the prophets"; and David did for the Church what he did for the State. "In every work of his he gave thanks to the Holy One the Most High with words of glory: with his whole heart he sang praise, and loved Him that made him. Also he set singers before the altar, and to make sweet melody by their music. He gave comeliness to the feasts, and set in order the seasons to perfection: while they praised God's holy name, and the sanctuary sounded from early morning" (Ecclus. xlvii. 8-10). Worship had found its rightful line, and it never ceased to be the psalmody of David.

It is quite clear—the Psalms themselves show it—that liturgical worship developed and changed in the

ages following David. But it is also clear that it retained its old framework: the Jew might sing a "new song," and be proud of it, but he never imagined he was going away from the way his fathers worshipped. The value they attached to one skilled in liturgical leadership is shown by 1 Chron. xv. 22: "Chenanith, chief of the Levites, was over the song (the whole psalmody of the service), because he was skilful"; and by the lament of the people of Bethel in time of ruin (lxxiv. 9), we have neither a soldier-king to rally us round his banner, nor a prophet to teach us lessons, nor a psalmist to frame services for us. The literal translation is, "Our signs or banners we see not; there is no more a prophet; nor have we any that knows a 'How long.'"

With the division of the kingdom, there were four main centres of worship—Jerusalem, Gerizim, Bethel and Dan. We sometimes speak of Northern Israel as if the only thing to say about it is that golden calves were set up in Dan and Bethel; but the Church of Elijah and Elisha had much more in it than that. When the northern kingdom was extinguished, its refugees coming south to Jerusalem produced an effect like that following the fall of Constantinople on the Western Church. It brought their treasures of literature to Jerusalem; it stirred the South to fresh productiveness. The liturgies were adapted for southern use, and our Book of Psalms is the final collection of all their riches from all their shrines in their final shape.

As in the case of the narratives of Genesis, the

more we see of resemblances of origin between Jewish and other worship, the more we appreciate the difference of spirit. It is a case of different flowers from the same soil. When Elijah challenged the priests of Baal on Carmel, it was not to a new and strange test: "Let each of us carry out his usual worship—we do the same things, we set sacrifices on altars, cry to God: and God will show the entire difference: one He accepts, one He refuses." The wonderful prayer of Elijah, his summons-cry to God, is the same liturgical act as the hysterical appeals of the priests of Baal. Who would imagine that "O Baal, hear us" and "Send out Thy light and Thy truth, let them lead me" are forms of the same cry? The true knowledge and worship have transformed the age-old cry. There is one of the battle-liturgies that appeals to God to look at the enemy on the opposite hill performing apparently just the same worship as that of His own people: "God on high, the while I fear, I put my trust in Thee. I will not fear; what can man do unto me? All the day long they copy my words before idols: against me all their charms for ill" (lvi. 3-5). The actions were as like, the spirit as different, as Balaam's worship and Aaron's. It is instructive to read some of the penitentials of Babylonian worship (though there is much in them that is fine), and then turn to Psalm li. Again, Israelite and Babylonian alike were aware that they might come under God's chastisement for unwitting sin. It is a true instinct of mankind, that to say "our fathers did not think this wrong" or "everybody does it,"

is not a complete justification for a man. Man must be ever advancing into clearer moral sight, ever becoming more sensitive in conscience; unwitting infractions of the moral law must bring their penalty, just as do those of the laws of health. That way alone lies the hope of progress. But there was no progress under the Babylonian's method. For him it was a dreary puzzle: evidently he had offended, not a God of righteousness who was educating him, but some one of a host of gods or goddesses, each with his own crotchets or private malice. Which had he offended? He must run through name after name with his humble apologies, of little ethical value to himself. The Jew could say, "Against Thee only have I sinned" (li. 4), and with the knowledge of a righteous, just, and disciplining God, the petition to be saved and taught can pass at once into the cleansing aspirations of cxxxix. 23-24, cxliii., and the beautiful ethical ambition of Psalm xix. 7-14: "Who can tell how oft he offendeth? O cleanse Thou me from my secret faults. Let the words of my lips, and the meditation of my heart, be always acceptable in Thy sight, O Lord, my strength and my redeemer."

Perhaps the best illustration of difference of spirit in doing the same thing is to be found in the prayers to God for preservation against hostile charms and spells. Danger is a fact of human life: and dangers are not simply the result of a man's or nation's own weakness, fault, or unwariness; he needs more than his own innocence or strength to defend him—for instance, from illness. The Jew, like the Babylonian,

drew the deduction that such inflictions were the result of enemies attacking him by curses and charms. Some of the most revolting of human actions have been founded on this idea, of self-defence against magic and witchcraft; witness African stories of the "smelling out" of witches and enemies, and the cruel treatment of suspected witches in England at no distant period. To think of himself as attacked by invisible dangers has been one of the causes that could throw man's mind into real panic. It leads to superstitions as to the use of counter-charms, of objects potent to defend, sometimes fantastic and gruesome.* Above all, men attached potency to the use of the names of the gods, names revealed by the great teacher, and only known perhaps to the expert, the priest; and there might be old ritual phrases, of forgotten meaning, but carefully preserved as being potent in this connection.

Into this unsavoury morass the Jews were cast, and it is most instructive to see how, while they still used counter-charm services, their belief in God transformed and spiritualised them. There is no more beautiful psalm than xci.: it is a favourite especially of friends of missionaries; it was of profound comfort in the years of the Great War. Yet it preserves all the framework of a Babylonian counter-charm, purified by the true belief. It opens with four names of God—"Most High, the Almighty, the Lord, God"; it

* Such, for instance, as those used by the witches in "Macbeth.' There are many passages in the Waverley novels that show how real and vivid were the beliefs and terrors men felt about astrology and black magic. The Wizard's Tale in "Lorna Doone" amusingly shows popular beliefs.

proclaims assurance (which was a common Jewish way of making a prayer for a boon urgently needed) that God preserves from " the trap that snareth, from the word of destruction " (3). It enumerates the terrors that magic can aim at the victim, which human strength cannot avoid (5, 7, 13) ; it passes on into the beautiful description of the guardian angels.

We appreciate this advance of spirit the more, because even Christianity has not always kept men clear of the superstitious idea of protection against powers of evil. The superstition lies in the thought that a natural object, or an outward act, can of itself protect, or pledge God to protect : or in the idea that witchcraft can bring such dangers. " St. Patrick's Breastplate " is not quite clear from it. In the Holy Land today, even among Christians, the use of amulets is prevalent ; for the Moslem the air is so full of djinn that " if one were to mount in the air and drop a pin, it could not find a way through to the earth." Relics, the sign of the Cross, and written pledges against the power of witches, solemnly blessed, have all been superstitiously used. The use of mascots in England during the war was at least partly serious. Christians have not yet all reached the highest belief won by the Jew and fulfilled by Jesus : which on its religious side is expressed in " Comus," on its ethical in side the story of Galahad.

CHAPTER V

THE GOD OF ALL MANKIND

Jewish outlook upon other races, and God's purpose for them. They were drawn in two opposing directions: by race-enmity, leading to the prayer that God would crush the aliens; by the feeling that God's glory demands the worship of all mankind. Teaching on this subject by the Prophets; in the Psalms; expressed in visions of a "day of judgment." Illustrations—lxxxii., lxviii., lxxxvii. Fulfilment of their thought in the book of Revelation; idea of evangelisation added, almost unknown before except in book of Jonah.

THE education of every race must include an outlook upon mankind—a feeling towards other peoples, a conviction about their place in the scheme of things; and if the race believes in one God of all the world, then it must formulate a belief about the relation of other races to Him, of His ambitions and plans for them. This might be avoided by a race living in complete isolation, but when God gave the Jews Palestine as His chosen land for their education, it became inevitable for them. To take a modern illustration, they could no more ignore other races than people living at Brooklands can ignore motors. We should expect to find this feeling progressive and to some extent varying in locality: the people of the main road might feel more acutely than those in quieter back streets, and the longer experience went on, the clearer would convictions grow.

The Psalms represent the popular worship and

feelings of the ordinary Israelite. We have seen that their admirable flexibility kept them always open to the teachings of the prophets and leaders of Israel; but often the Psalms would lag behind the prophets, and often they would retain older thoughts and prejudices when more enlightened ideas had won their way. They therefore give us a view of the stages through which Jewish thought passed in its outlook upon other races, as these succeeded one another, often overlapping, the wider ideal rarely quite obliterating the narrower. We see a picture of opinions pulled in two almost contradictory directions: on the one hand, experience of the ravages of the Egyptian and Assyrian feeding a fierce race-enmity; on the other, the belief in the glory and dignity of the One God leading to the implication that all races must be His people, with a destiny planned by Him.

There are two ways in which the view of God's providence for all mankind is set forth in the Old Testament. One appears mainly in the Prophets, the other in both the Prophets and the Psalms; and as one object of our study of the Psalms is to set them closer in the background of the whole life of this race being educated by God, it will be of interest to compare them. First, there is the prophetic: the statesman's outlook put before his people. "Look out over the nations of the world: God has plans for them all, not for one only. You must look out on this whether you like it or not: you cannot even tell whether to redig your wells, rebuild your raided homes, plant next year's crops or rely on 'that which groweth of itself,'

until you have estimated the coming movements of the great Empires around you. Something big is happening in our world today: a great soldier is thinking out plans in Assyria: Egypt is waning: Palestine is on the brink of invasion: but the one God has it all under control." A man of vision like Isaiah looks out over the world and says: "All this is being wielded by the One God to great ends. I can even see some of them: can tell you the function of the war-like Assyrian, God's scourge: the function of commercial Sidon and Tyre, the splendours of their destiny, the danger of decadence that is implicit in their function as world-traders. I can see the interlocking of their destinies with those of my own people Israel, and interpret it for practical statesman's advice what we should do. But far beyond what I can see, I *know* that the mighty purposes of God embrace the whole human race and a final human destiny." That is a catholic faith—one that cannot think of a God with individual or national favourites. It finds its climax in Isaiah xix. 25, where God Himself brackets in equal blessing, "Egypt my people and Assyria the work of my hands" with "Israel my inheritance." It finds its way into the Psalms, as in the glorious hymn lxvii., *Deus Misereatur*.

The other way of setting forth a world-outlook is quite different. If we believe in a God of all mankind, with a purpose for His human creation, then there will come some great climax of His workings—possibly, though not necessarily, the end of the world: at least some moment in which the unity behind all human

movements and confusions will become clear. Imagine that climax: some great "day of the Lord"; put it before yourself as a vision. Inevitably you will find that you must imagine it as a day of all nations: mankind as a whole must be there; you cannot imagine the One God with the Last Day for one race or religion alone; you cannot separate it from the necessity of the summoning of all races and peoples. It will not be merely that each has travelled by a separate track and must meet at the end, but all the way along, all the destinies must have been interlocked. Race-comradeship must be an essential feature in each race's development. To know it and act up to it is a call to each. Race-antagonism is the worst perversion of it: mere race-neutrality is a complete and fundamental contradiction of it. That day of climax will answer the question, "What will God do to the other nations?" It will show that all along God meant something for, had plans for, each people of earth. It is not merely that none are left out, but that He planned for mankind as a unit. No thoughtful man can think of his God except as the God of mankind; no nation can finally think of its destinies as separate from those of others. This is an unavoidable implication from belief in the One God of all mankind. Experience presses it home. There are times when we draw closer to other races, and are impelled to international co-operation. On the other hand, the Jews had crisis after crisis like that of 1914 for us, when it seemed clear that we could only secure our own destiny by doing something (in this case, a

hateful and destructive something) to another race. But the message of religion is that a race's destinies do not only intermingle with those of another in times when they specially clash, or specially draw together. There is never a time when we can rightly forward our own race destiny without doing something to other nations, and our normal outlook is intended to be acts of race-friendship, communication of our best, in thoughtful and generous co-operation.

This line of thought, which works back to an outlook on the world today from a vision of things come to their climax, is most clearly stated in lxxiii. 17. The world is full of the wicked apparently prospering. This was too difficult and painful to understand "until I come into God's sanctuary and comprehend their latter end." There are many examples of this in English literature, with the very significant difference, that the Jew looks to a climax that is an inevitable deduction from the fact that there is a God of mankind. Such books as "Looking Backward" or "When the Sleeper Wakes," treat the fact of God as negligible, and formulate a climax that is the result of present-day tendencies carried to their conclusion: the process of thought that the Jew apologised for as foolish, ignorant, brutish (lxviii. 21-22).

In the Bible this method is frequent; men imagine what God will some day make His world, and thereby find a set of values for the world as it is in their own day. It is usually set forth in a vision. Some clearly proclaim themselves as such: for instance, those of Daniel, Ezekiel, Isaiah, or the author of Revelation.

But others are more puzzling, because the vision is not proclaimed: it would be obvious to the worshipper at the time, but leaves the meaning confused at first for us until we realise the author's process. This is especially so with the Psalms. Examples will now be considered which illustrate by this method the stages of thought about other races through which the Hebrews passed.

(*a*) Psalm lxxxii. begins: "God presideth in the divine council: in the midst of the gods He judgeth." The other nations are represented by their gods, assembled to hear God's verdict. These are sternly rebuked for their conduct to Israel: "the poor, the afflicted, the needy" are the nation of Israel, and "the wicked" are the other nations, as constantly in the Psalms (Peters, p. 22). So the condemnation is pronounced (6-7): "Ye are gods, but ye shall die like men." Here is a simple outlook: "God save us, and to hell with the rest" (literally). Not, perhaps, an inexcusable outlook, for people suffering constantly the frightfulness of ancient warfare as shown on the monuments of Babylonia: and to be matched in spirit by many other of the earlier liturgies (Chapter XIII., p. 178). It started early, and it persisted late, even when wider views had been promulgated, as we see from Jeremiah, and "cursing" psalms like cix. But there is one thing to notice. This psalm belongs to the liturgies of Bethel, and in that group it is linked with a very strong assertion of the duty of a people to look after its own members: "We must teach and care for all our race: we must play fair to all our own

people." So they developed those psalms known as "To teach the children," of which lxxviii. is the best example. No nation can live on the plan that those who can get the best influences do so, and the rest look after themselves: that those who live nearest the focus of the race—its Temple, its homeland, its schools—should contentedly take sole advantage of them. It is essential that the whole race should be kept true to the character of the race, and if religion is a necessary element, then the religion of the whole race is the concern of each member of it, especially of the most privileged. Weaknesses and deterioration anywhere are not merely a local concern, but "wounds of the Church." The teaching of the children of pioneers in Kootenay or Bunbury, the provision of the sacraments to lonely, heavily tested men and women in Damaraland or the Sudan or China, is as necessary a call on the resources of our race as the maintenance of worthy worship at Westminster Abbey.

(*b*) In Psalm lxviii. we see a different stage of thought. The vision of the glory of God above demands the worship of all mankind. That, and not mere punishment or destruction, must be what He plans for them. But no one is called upon to like these other races! We may invent a whole set of opprobrious nicknames for them (p. 192), and hope that God will not let them off too lightly; we point out their bad habits of looting and raiding. No doubt they will be there when God gathers up His peoples, but the prospect does not set us rejoicing.

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As an instance of overlapping, we note that lxviii. had its home at Gerizim side by side with lxvii., the *Deus Misereatur*, with its exultant welcome to all the peoples to praise God.

(*c*) How different is the outlook in Psalm lxxxvii. There is no psalm in all the Psalter more worthy of true understanding. Here is Peters's literal version of it as it was used at Dan.

His foundation in Mountains of Sanctuary.
Glorious things are spoken of Thee, O city of God.
Selah.
I will count Rahab and Babel of them that know Me; Philistia and Tyre, with Ethiopia;
This one was born there.
And of Zion it shall be said, Each and every one was born in her; and the Most High, He establisheth her.
The Lord will write in the book of the nations;
This one was born there.
Selah.
Rubric: Singers and pipers together.
Anthem: "All my fountains in Thee."

It is a prevision of the Catholic Church before the coming of Christ; like all that is catholic, it is abundantly joyful and abundantly generous; it culminates in an anthem with a rubric—all the orchestra is to be in this, all the congregation, all the world, in chorus to the God of man's life. The psalm originated at Dan; its vision is set out in the opening half-verse: "His foundation in Mountains of Sanctuary," that is, Hermon, at whose base ran the great world-roads along which came all earth's peoples. God is seated on the great white throne for the "day of the Lord"; just as in the vision of Revelation, framed by a man

whose view of sacred Hermon showed it with the crystal sea of Galilee at its foot. Verse 2 may be omitted; it was added later when the psalm was adapted for Jerusalem, a trace of that South versus North feeling not unknown in other lands; "it is Zion the Lord loves, not your northern shrines; He has abandoned them to ruin"; strange how the touch of the narrow bigot will thumb even the most broad-minded utterances! Reading on, we find the names of nation after nation—Philistia, Rahab (Egypt), and Ethiopia, Babylon and Phœnicia—and one phrase continually recurs: "This one was born there." The day of the Lord has come; He is writing up the book of life; and it is inevitably a book of the nations. Here is the vision; all the peoples are gathered before God; one feature of the day will be the glad question: "What nation comes next?" It goes even further. Just as heathen Jebus had become God's Zion, so all the world will become as truly and totally His, not by obliterating other races, but by making them too God's own people. So no matter where a man was born, yet "of Zion it shall be said, 'This and this man was born there.'" All differences will finally disappear, all races meet as fellow-citizens before God's throne; that is what He wills; that shall come to pass; that shall be in men's minds as a guiding thought in all national relationships. Surely this is the climax of Old Testament thought, as the kindred vision of the New Jerusalem coming down from heaven is the climax of the New Testament (Rev. xxi.-xxii.). "Glorious things are spoken of Thee, O city of God,"

for when you say Zion you say nothing less than the whole earth. It is a wonderful foreshadowing of the pronouncement of Paul, that in Jesus there shall be neither bond nor free, Jew nor Gentile. Earth's differences are real, but we know their true value only by realising that ultimately they disappear before God. With such a vision of the climax of time, the Hebrew worshipper had something to guide him how he should feel towards Egypt or Babylon in his own tangled struggling times; the dominating fact is, we are all brethren on our way to comradeship before the throne of God.

The Fulfilment of these Thoughts by Jesus.—Even to this highest of Old Testament thought Jesus had something to add—something that fits home to it, yet is not a mere addition but a revolution. The vision on which the whole book of Revelation is founded is most clearly expressed in Rev. vii. 9-12, the great multitude of all nations and people and tongues that stood exultantly before God not merely in worship but in comradeship. Mention any difference that now divides men, language, or race or culture; in the final balance it does not weigh; thus you may learn to estimate it rightly while it still lasts. We should realise that it cannot have been easy for the early Christian author to reach this exultant welcome of all human comradeship. If it was John on whose thought the book was shaped, he had passed through the awful penal servitude of Patmos, the Siberia of the Roman Empire. He had seen the Roman Empire mass all its might to destroy the Church, which he

knew to be the hope of human brotherhood, human completion. The book shows that he passed through a stage of thought very like some of the psalms, in which he cried to Rome, "God's curse upon you; you cannot win; cannot win everywhere, cannot win anywhere, against His Church."* But he passes out beyond that; his final vision of human brotherhood is that which is to be normal for the believer in a catholic Christ, a God of all mankind. When you say "the redeemed," you say "mankind."

Thus far, Christian thought is parallel to our psalm, and should pay its tribute of understanding and admiration. But the Church, by the leading of Jesus, added a new element which went far beyond any psalm. It transcended the idea of mere welcome to the nations when they shall have found God; it laid its whole stress on the duty of helping the nations to that happy climax. Evangelisation and love were added to welcome. We are not justified in saying that the race of Israel in Old Testament times felt no call to evangelisation of other races. There are traces of it in the Psalms; and there is the wonderful book of Jonah, the Jew on whose conscience was laid a compelling impulse to help and call another race. But such thought made little impression on the religion of the ordinary Hebrew. The Church of Christ has no choice but to place this thought of evangelisation before its ordinary member as the heart and soul of his religion. Jesus changed the whole outlook. No thoughtful believer can come before Christ and

* See Ramsay, "Letters to the Seven Churches."

shrug his shoulders at the idea that other races have never heard of Him. The Jew had reached the noble conception that God could not but be the One God of all mankind. "Hallowed be Thy name" must mean that God should have no less a worship than that of all the world. The Christian has passed on from the idea of a God whose dignity is hurt to that of a Saviour whose heart is wounded while any race knows Him not. The simplest of all definitions of a Christian is, one who shares the ambitions of Christ. There can be no doubt what that implies for any Christian nation.

To the Jew God gave the world-message: there is a God of all mankind. But they did not become a race of world-messengers. The noblest Jews, like Micah, saw that all privilege must imply sterner judgment by God upon its possessors; but they did not draw the inference that privilege meant the duty of evangelisation. Let us beware lest, though we have the teaching of Jesus added to the very noble teaching of the greatest Hebrews, we rise no higher than they. The Jews were fighting for their lives during the greater part of their history; for centuries their position was not strikingly different from that of Christian Churches under Moslem rule. We must not pass judgment, but we must aim higher. Among the peoples of the world today God has one race which is in close touch with almost every tribe and nation of the earth—our own British race. It is not weak and oppressed, as Israel was for centuries of its Old Testament history, but powerful; its people have had the training of centuries

of freedom and development. If ever one could say, "Here is a race that, in the plans of God, has been equipped as a messenger-race," it is the British race today. We are a Christian nation; we have the message that all mankind needs, about the God of all mankind. Surely our messengership must be the crown of our race-function.

PART II

ELEMENTS OF THE LITURGY OF SACRIFICE

General Remarks.—Are we justified in regarding the Psalms as orders of service, built up on a framework? What do we gain by studying them structurally?

WHAT do we gain by studying the Psalms structurally, as orders of service? Was this what they actually were to those who originated them and first used them? If our Anglican liturgy had reached us as one continuous document, we should owe much to the man who disentangled it, showed us which were rubrics, which parts were respectively exhortations, humble access, canon, thanksgiving. Can we apply a similar process to the Psalms? What is our justification for regarding them as complex liturgies covering a whole order of service, rather than as hymns, continuous poems to be sung at some moment in a service?

In the Old Testament there are full and elaborate descriptions of liturgical services in the Temple. Ecclus. l., of course, represents worship at a date centuries after David. Scholars tell us that the account of the Dedication of the Temple in Chronicles represents probably the annual Festival of Dedication at a later time rather than the actual dedication by Solomon. Still, the historical books leave us in no doubt that from the earliest times in Palestine Israel

worshipped God with sacrifice, and the general setting of their service was always of the same type: perhaps a procession; ceremonial acts of prostration and purification; humble access; a tense moment before the sacrifice, cries of summons to God and praise to God, combined, perhaps, with a curse on God's enemies.

When, therefore, we read a psalm, and find that the sequence of thought in it follows this same order—that it contains ejaculations, sentences, or odes which seem essentially fit to accompany this or that part of the normal order of service—we naturally conclude that the different parts may have been used separately, each at its own appropriate moment in the service, rather than the whole psalm sung as a continuous poem at one moment. When we find that this applies to psalm after psalm, the deduction is strengthened. Some psalms follow only part of the whole order of service, but always in the same general sequence. There is not mechanical accuracy; the framework is flexible, especially in providing devotions for the tense moment just before the sacrifice. Some psalms seem to adapt themselves to one moment of the service only, such as c. for entering the gate, li. for the purification, cxvii. and others for the praise-song, xciii. for the opening vision. We deduce that such psalm was available for general use at its own moment in any service as required. There is often a cry using the simile of fire; we find that it usually occurs at the natural sacrificial stage of the liturgy, following a passage that would suit the act of prostration and humble access, preceding a passage happily adapted

to be a praise-cry. The whole poetic structure of the psalms shows them to be divided into stanzas, with change of topic and tone, often very abrupt, that will allow of their being allotted thus to stages of a service.

In the first three books of the Psalms the musical and liturgical notes are fuller, both in the headings and in the text; a psalm will often contain three or even four times that interesting annotation "Selah." Readers should refer to Peters (Introduction, pp. 41-43) for a full discussion of the meaning of the Selah. But each can make his own test. Take any psalm where Selah occurs, read that psalm as suggested, as an order of service, see whether the Selah does not almost always occur at what the psalm itself shows to be the natural moment or moments. One very early psalm may serve as illustration. Psalm iii. is divided into four symmetrical stanzas, each of two verses. Three of the stanzas end with a Selah; the other stanza (5-6), instead of a Selah, has a cry, evidently a summons-cry to God at a moment of sacrifice: "Arise, Lord, save me, my God." Looking at the thought of each stanza separately, we find that the first is the usual tone of "humble access": "Lord, how many my foes! Many rising against me; Many saying concerning me: 'There is no help for him in God.'" The second is a cry of assurance and summons to the gracious God: "But Thou, Lord, art a shield about me, my glory, that lifteth up my head; Aloud to the Lord I cry; and He answereth me from the hill of His shrine." The third stanza uses the simile of lying down and awaking, and is followed by

the cry to God to arise—a frequent thought to accompany and spiritualise the act of prostration: "I laid me down and slept, I awaked, for the Lord sustained me. I will not fear myriad folk who have compassed me about." The fourth is the final praise-cry after the great sacrifice: "For Thou hast smitten on the cheekbone all my foes, the teeth of the wicked Thou hast broken. Of the Lord is the victory; on Thy people Thy blessing." Is it fanciful, then, to think of this short but carefully constructed psalm being carried out as an order for the morning sacrifice? The two earlier Selahs mark preliminary sacrifices, possibly during a procession, as in lxxxiv.; the place of the third Selah is indicated by an equivalent, the sacrificial cry which possibly was for general use at each sacrifice. Note that the cry, "Arise, Lord," is as much an addition to the poem as Selah is; the stanza 5-6 is complete without it, exactly balancing the other stanzas.

Not all the psalms are sacrificial liturgies. It has been pointed out in Chapter II. that some were for festivals of social life, such as marriage, harvest, or vintage, when the folk did not gather in the Temple but in the home or field or vineyard. But the majority are orders of service for the Temple; there all worship centred in sacrifice. The blazing forth of the sacrificial fire upon the altar was a supreme moment; man kindled it, but it was fire from heaven, the pledge that God accepted the offered worship. The worshippers responded to it with all the depth of stirred feeling that accompanies the moment when man

comes nearest to God. They took the greatest care that they should not come to the great moment without due preparation, nor depart after it without due thanksgiving. A psalm-liturgy thus falls into three sections—the preparation, the sacrifice, the thanksgiving. The preparation was elaborately worked out, using sanctified ingenuity to secure a maximum of focussed thought and sensitised feeling. It frequently included a procession through suggestive historic scenes, either actually through their sites, or mentally through memories of them. It often propounded a vision, a key-thought for the service, a memory or mind-picture in the light of which men of today were to think out the problems of today. For the great festival services, worshippers often came long pilgrimages—from Babylonia or Egypt or the Western Mediterranean; with a superb liturgical genius, their experiences were called in to be part of their preparation for the great moment. The knocking at the Temple gate, the crossing of the holy threshold, the ritual acts of purification and prostration, all were made to minister to the certainty of faith, to turn beliefs into convictions, to chasten with prayers of humble access.

The psalm framework is the same as that which underlies Christian eucharistic liturgies; it is not merely Jewish, it is human and catholic. But nowhere is it so clear nor used with such inspired liturgical genius as in the Psalms. It has been said that no Christian ought to be able to repeat his Creed without wanting to get up on a chair and shout. The Jew,

with infinitely less reason for that exultation, took much greater care that it should actually grip him, that each worshipper should be possessed by, entranced by, the certainties he knew. The Jew also took greater care that no worshipper should depart without having said a worthy thank-you to God the Giver of all. We have still something to learn from the Psalms as liturgies.

CHAPTER VI

THE PREPARATION FOR THE GREAT MOMENT

The Pilgrim Journey to Jerusalem

Joy of the Babylonian pilgrim, to leave heathen surroundings for home and Temple. Desert journey and its dangers made a preparation for worship on arrival. Illustrations from the Pilgrim Psalter, "Songs of Ascents," cxx.-cxxxiv. Dangers of the desert; sight of the hills of the homeland; of compact Jerusalem after straggling Babylon. Their pilgrimage reproduced in miniature as part of their liturgies.

THERE was a large community of Jews living in Babylonia even after the Restoration. We of the British race are perhaps specially fitted to understand what this must have meant to those Jews. Our race, with the world-wide trade and responsibilities, sends out its men, often too their families, to live isolated or in small communities amidst thronging peoples of another race, another religion, and another standard of life, amidst surroundings that reflect that standard and religion. We can enter into the feelings of that Jewish community, accentuated in them by their being a subject and oppressed race, with a religion that could not be fully practised except in their own Temple at Jerusalem. They were conscious of the deadweight of alien surroundings and customs, in a land so different from their own hill-country; their hearts were craving for "God's own country"; eagerly they sought the latest news (Neh. i.); they felt an overpowering ambition to go there on pilgrimage;

all the overseas Englishmen's feelings about "home" and "furlough" and the safeguarding of his children, sharpened by present despair and cherished Messianic hopes.

Year by year a pilgrim caravan set out from Mesopotamia to come to the great festivals at Jerusalem. In the latter part of Jewish history, as, for instance, at the Passover of our Lord's Passion, the larger proportion of the festival worshippers would be other than dwellers at Jerusalem. For such, the effort and sacrifice they had made in order to be there, and the experiences they had faced on the way, were a real part of their preparation for the great services; a certain mood had been produced in them, which they carried forward into the service, such, for instance, as would be characteristic of a service for returned soldiers. Arrangements were designed deliberately to induce and heighten this mood, on the journey, and after happy arrival at Jerusalem. It was not left merely for the experiences of the journey to affect them if they were impressionable. They thought it out, how to educate themselves on the way, how to "turn their necessity to glorious gain." From generations of pilgrimages, with experiences that could be classified into types, they learnt how best to use the pilgrim journey.

One thing they did was to compose pilgrim songs. Ezra ii. 15 says that there were "singers" among them. And in Psalms cxx.-cxxxiv. we have a collection of these "songs of ascent," of the pilgrims going up. When they were collected for a "pilgrim

psalter," they were rounded off with a doxology (cxxxi. 3), and three psalms were added (cxxxii.-cxxxiv.) that evidently emanate from the Temple liturgiologists arranging the collection for use as a pilgrimage in miniature at Jerusalem. These psalms reflect actual experiences; they were composed by men who had been through it, not by scholars in the study; they are parallel to Chaucer writing about a Canterbury pilgrimage rather than to Tennyson writing about a tournament of knights. One would say the songs wrote themselves gradually, as folk-songs, out of the collective experiences of many generations of pilgrimage and of residence in Babylon. They are not mere generalised pious songs; they take into account the actual dangers and stresses that the pilgrims of the past had met, in their foreign home and on their journey, and that the pilgrims singing them each year were sure to meet. They showed how those of the past had found edification and help in such dangers; so they help the pilgrims of the present to do the same. "There hath no temptation taken you but such as is common." If we imagine the progress of the caravan, the psalms become vivid, and we see the mood that, they knew, God meant the pilgrim to be in when he came at last to the Temple sacrifice.

Imagine that pilgrim procession mustering for the start; setting out from Mesopotamia; crossing the Euphrates valley; toiling through the desert; at last seeing the hills of the Holy Land; then arriving at Jerusalem. Good illustrative parallels would be, the

setting out of the Moslem pilgrimage to Mecca; or the Russian pilgrim companies of the nineteenth century, now so tragically interrupted; or the story of the Crusaders catching sight of Jerusalem from "Mount-Joie."

The Mustering.—Read Ezra viii. 21-23. Many would be fulfilling their dream, the ambition of a lifetime, and making a considerable worldly sacrifice to come. Many, no doubt, would hope to die there, as Christian pilgrims did; the Turks always tried to hurry the Russian pilgrims out, because of this ambition.

On the Journey.—Peters describes how he travelled this same route from Mesopotamia, before the time when motor-cars crossed the desert, as they do now, in a day! It took him a month, and he had a strong party, and a certain sense of race-superiority; it must have taken a Jewish caravan three months, and they were a subject people. He found just the same dangers, and felt the same emotions, that are so vividly indicated in Ezra viii. and these pilgrim psalms. First they cross the narrow valleys of the Euphrates, a lair of lions; on their high cliffs they see the numberless tents of Bedouin: these are blackmailers and ambushers; Peters aptly says that the Bedouin were to Jewish imagination what the traditional Red Indian used to be to the white man, men of "lying lips, deceitful tongue" (cxx. 1-4). None ever knew, as they passed these natural ambush-places, when there would come a flight of "arrows of the warrior sharpened with coals of broom"—hardened and sharpened in

their smithy-fires. The roots of broom, Arabic *retem*, are still regarded as giving the best charcoal. Then out into the desert, its dreary plains so burning hot by day, so bitter cold by night; no cold is felt like the cold of the desert, as any soldier can testify who served in the campaign from Egypt against Palestine. There, too, are its nomads from the north-east, Meshech, like the Turks and Kurds of today, and its ravaging Arabs from the south, Kedar.* Humanly speaking, the great need of the caravan here would be unsleeping watchfulness by its guards. But even this could do little; they are thrown back on God alone as their guardian. See all this reflected in cxx., cxxi.: "Woe is me that I journeyed through Meshech, abode among the tents of Kedar. Long time I dwelt with the hater of peace; when I gave them the greeting of peace (*salem aleikum*) they were for battle"; they replied with arrows or a charge. And the heat and cold: "the

* The following notice appeared in *The Times* on December 29, 1927. Imagine it dated, as it well might have been, 2,500 years ago, and the news passing round in that same Mesopotamia just before a pilgrim caravan was to start across the bandit's raiding area!

SIMKO THE KURD BREAKS OUT AGAIN

BASRA, *December* 28.

Simko, the lawless and influential chieftain of Southern Kurdistan, has again become a source of trouble to the Iraqi (Babylonian) authorities. With thirty followers he has taken to highway robbery for a livelihood in the Sidekan district, near Rowanduz. The inhabitants of five villages have already fled with their cattle and chattels to safer regions. The Government is said to have offered to allow Simko and his followers to settle in some lowland area or near a Government post, but Simko refuses to do this, and it is feared that he may eventually join that other Kurdish stormy petrel, Ahmed of Barzan, further north.

Lord is thy keeper, the Lord thy shade on thy right hand; the sun shall not hurt thee by day, neither the moon by night" (cxxi. 5-6). We need watchfulness; God will provide it: "May He not slumber that keepeth thee" (cxxi. 3). Peters tells how often he woke in the night and found every sentry asleep. So the lesson is learnt (cxxi. 7-8, and cxx. i.), God alone is their reliance.

Then comes the sight of the hills. Their route would probably be from the Euphrates by way of Palmyra to Damascus. Near Damascus, mighty Hermon would show above the dreary, dangerous plains. It meant home, welcome, holy rites and associations, safety! So "I lift up mine eyes unto the hills" (cxxi. i.); God's own land, God's own people, at last. We can imagine the arrival at Jerusalem (Ezra viii. 31-32), and the meeting with other pilgrims from other parts, caravan after caravan greeted with mutual joy. "I was glad when they said to me (all those miles back, all those months ago, in Babylon), Let us go to the House of the Lord"; let us go the pilgrimage. And now, "Our feet stand in thy gates, O Jerusalem" (cxxii. 1-2). Note also the naïve and natural remarks of the pilgrim seeing his "compact" city, so different from Babylon or Memphis (cxxxii. 3), and the final touch of joy (cxxxiii. 1); is it not splendid for us all to be here together?

We shall see later (Chapter XVII., Psalm cvii.) that even now their Church had not done with the fact of their being pilgrims; their pilgrimage was, as it were, reproduced in miniature, when the Levites

massed on the Temple steps and sang through the pilgrim psalter, and when they were grouped in separate squads, according to their domicile, for some of the great services. But for the present, to show that the sufferings they faced were real, we need only quote one pilgrim. St. Paul says that he was thrice shipwrecked, once adrift for a day and a night, in perils of waters, robbers, in the city, in the wilderness; in weariness, pain, hunger and thirst, cold and nakedness; liable to false imprisonment and savage punishment, ambush and escapes; and he was a Roman citizen, in a civilised world. When a man has gone through such things to get to a great day, he is prepared with a mood of appreciation when it comes.

There is teaching here for us Christians. This is a mood in which we need to come to our great moment of Communion with God through Jesus Christ—the mood of having longed for it, hungered for it, sacrificed for it; a reproduction of His feeling towards men: "With desire I have desired to eat this Passover with you." It is a mood perhaps easier for many of our overseas brethren than for us at home. There is a danger that things may become too easy for us, whereas it is a common story what distances they will often come for their often rare opportunities of their Sacrament. One safeguard we can take: let us enter by sympathetic imagination into the lives and feelings of those who have scanty and infrequent ministrations from their Church, as disclosed, for instance, in the Fifth World Call Report. Remember them at our own feast; send forth to them a blessing from our

abundance, so far as our prayers can do it, and join in the Church's efforts to be as pioneering as the people of our race.

NOTE.—The actual habit of pilgrimage, once so great a feature of English Christianity, that kept the roads full to Canterbury and Glastonbury and Durham, shows some signs of reviving in visits to the Holy Land planned in a devotional spirit. The pilgrim travels in comfort today, and must see to it that he does not thereby miss the feeling of a hardly won prize, that came naturally to the Russian or the Crusader. When the first Anglo-Catholic Pilgrimage (1924) reached Jerusalem, it greeted the sight of the Holy City with the singing of psalms from the Pilgrim Psalter. Its members may perhaps in retrospect be glad of the accident that they had been many hours without food, and were weary and thirsty! So were the authors of that psalm.

CHAPTER VII

THE PREPARATION FOR THE GREAT MOMENT (continued)

The Procession

Value of a procession; numbers of worshippers, infection of feeling, beliefs worked up into exultant convictions, full reaction to "wonder-facts." Open-air type of music; marching-songs. Route chosen for suggestiveness. Procession-route at Jerusalem, at Gerizim, at Dan.

WHEN the worshippers come to the great moment, the Sacrifice, they want to be concentrated, gathered up in thought and feeling, sensitised. A procession is a very practical self-help for this purpose; it combines the inspiring of suggestive thoughts, the saying of things over and over (or singing them), and the infection of a lot of people doing it together. We gather, and welcome one another, just as the χριστὸς ἀνέστη passes back and forward at Easter in Jerusalem today. Joel ii. shows the variety of people that attended a penitential service in times of stress. We walk along, with marching-songs or catchwords chosen as the keynotes of the day's celebration and of the coming service. Thus we help ourselves to focus our thoughts on what we want to drive home into our minds, and to shut out all other thoughts. We say these things over and over, so that they shall become things we can never forget and never doubt; we will not reason about them again, but reason from them as first principles (see Chapter I. on lxxxiv.).

We have stopping-places, with preliminary sacrifices, and anthems and odes on the day's great thought. We choose our route so that we shall pass by places of historic significance and suggestiveness. Here God revealed a truth, taught a lesson, answered a problem, to someone in the past. When He did it for them, He meant it also for us.

A combination of lxxxiv. and cxviii. best shows the procession-route used in Jerusalem, and the use made of its sites. Lxviii. (see Chapter XIV.) followed the equally hallowed route available for the people of Shechem, including the view of Abraham's first altar, Jacob's Well, and Joseph's Tomb, the valley of the reading of the Law, and of Joshua's final speech. The psalms used at Bethel show less trace of processions, but at Dan xlii.-xliii. show a happy progress to the altar: "For I pass the huts, and lead the dance to the house of God, with noise of shouts and praises—a multitude making pilgrimage" (xlii. 4; Wellhausen translates "In the jubilant festival march"). This brings them from the place where the pilgrims had built their temporary shelters, past the springs of the Jordan, its great source by the little hill Mizar, under the towering sacred mount of Hermon (6), the pilgrims dancing and singing to enter the sacred enclosure—not a built Temple like Jerusalem, but an open-air shrine as at Bethel and Gerizim. Thus they come to "Thy holy hill and to Thy dwelling-place" (xliii. 3). Meanwhile they sing the refrain that was to be their master-thought (xlii. 5, 11; xliii. 5). There are no historic sites on the way, but the thundering of the

Jordan waters breaking forth from underground and dashing rapidly down its bed is spiritually interpreted. They perform their purification in the rushing torrent: "deep calleth unto deep to the thunder of Thy water-courses; all Thy waves and billows have passed over me." We shall see, in speaking of this group of psalms, that the local scenery furnished very beautiful spiritual illustrations (see Chapter XV.).

Again, there is a very happy picture of a procession in lxviii. 24-26. (The phrase "give thanks in the congregations from the ground of the heart" is so fine that one thanks the P.Bk. translators for making it out of "give thanks, ye from the Well of Jacob.") The Hebrews loved processions, exulted in the feeling of joint exhortation and praise; and they describe to themselves what they are doing as a help to the joy of it. The musical accompaniment is happily described in lxxxi. 1-3: "Raise the chant, and strike the tabret, the merry harp with the lute; shout aloud to the God of Jacob; blow the trumpet at new moon." The Egyptian and Babylonian monuments are rich in illustrations of processions, often, in Egypt, with a sacred Ark in the midst, and of the musical instruments used in the processions. It would be an open-air type of music, different in its whole conception from the setting of a Catholic Mass; its effect such as described by Milton,

> the Dorian mood
> Of flutes and soft recorders, such as stirred
> To heights of noblest valour heroes old
> Arming for battle.

We have to think of it less in terms of western music and cathedral services than in that of the East today, where the blowing of horns and beating of drums can stir multitudes to deepest feeling. When London welcomes home a war-scarred regiment, probably they march in orderly ranks behind a band. Far other would be the procedure and music when the delirious relief of the Jews at the death of Goliath found outlet in the processions of women choirs singing their refrain about Saul and David.

Even in the earliest services there was often more than one Selah, which indicated usually a sacrificial moment (iii., iv.), or at least a conclusion of a section of the service, probably a moving on from spot to spot. In later times worship became highly developed, and we find processional psalms with stages clearly indicated (lxxxiv., lxviii., xxiv., cxviii.). The final development was sequences of connected psalms forming one processional service. The "Hallel" (cxi.-cxviii.) was sung, not in procession, but different psalms at different stages of the Passover meal. Cxlv.-cl. seem to have been used along the route indicated in cxviii. (see Chapter XVII., p. 241.) Cxlv. is a literary introduction; cxlvi. would be sung outside the walls, cxlvii. at the gates of Zion (12-13); cxlviii. as they proceed "rampart by rampart" (*cf.* lxxxiv.); cxlix. in Zion, reminding them of God's promises that they should treat the world as David treated Jebus, capturing it and ruling it for God; cl. as they entered the sanctuary. Cxlix. indicates the music and shouting, dancing and sword-flashing, of the triumphal procession.

One thing the Hebrew worshipper knew well, that worship is wonder; and memory of God's workings, trust in Him, thoughts of His Creation, ambition of a worship for Him nothing short of world-wide, all must be fused into a final climax, an ecstasy of wonder, if man is to come with fullest receptiveness to the great moment. He must come not merely thinking but feeling, not merely concentrated in high thought but exultant with unspeakable conviction. The union we are going to have with God is not merely a fact, it is a wonder, a glory-fact. For, after all, one cannot fully appreciate a wonderful thing simply by thinking about it; one must wonder at it, exult in it, be drawn right out of oneself into the atmosphere of the Eternal. The procession ministered to this spirit, with its opening odes, its music and shouts, its sense of comradeship and reunion and reinforced faith in the national future. It naturally accorded with the use of language about God which does not depart from proved fact, but states it exultantly. One of the reasons why the *Gloria in Excelsis* is in some Christian liturgies used at the opening of the service, instead of at the end, as in the Anglican liturgy, is that it uplifts at once to this state of wonder about God and His Christ. In this hymn alone, perhaps, the Psalms have been surpassed in the expression of exultant wonder. Surely here we have the highest example of wonder-expression that human speech is capable of framing: ecstatic, yet never hysterical, never losing grip of the revealed facts of the unsearchable riches of the glorious Gospel of the Blessed Christ.

CHAPTER VIII

THE PREPARATION FOR THE GREAT MOMENT (*continued*)

The Propounding of the Vision

Practical value of a vision of God as help to action in God's world. Psalms are often obscure unless we realise the vision propounded, in the light of which to judge contemporary events, form sound outlook. N.T. use of the vision (Hebrews, Revelation). Some psalms simply an exultant vision; others a vision or visions with appropriate moral and worship. A topic; or vision of the world as it is; or of God in nature, God in history, God on Zion, God in His essential being and attributes, transcendent and yet near to save.

GREAT Christian teachers on prayer have insisted that it must begin with meditation; it may be on a topic, or on God, invisibly present, in some aspect or attribute of His glory and nature. In the light of this realised vision, awed by it, caught up by it, pass on to the prayer of affection and prayer of the will, facing the problems of life. The writer of the Book of Revelation gets the judgments he is to proclaim by a vision; he was "in the spirit," he beheld and heard the great God, he "turned to see," he fell prostrate in awe. We should expect to find that men of spiritual genius, preparing the services of old in God's Temple, knew and used the same method, and that the propounding of a vision was an important part of the opening of a psalm. And it is so.*

* It is surely unfortunate that our Anglican services of common prayer do not begin in this way, unless we pause over the Lord's Prayer to realise our Father in heaven, amidst a world that hallows, serves, and

One difficulty that we find in understanding the original meaning of many psalms is due to our failing to realise that they begin with the setting forth of a vision. "Think of this—it may be of God above creation, of God in Zion, of God freeing our fathers from Egypt—and in the light of that vision face the problems of today." It is an obviously inspiring method; military leaders of all ages have known well its appeal, as when Napoleon told his men at the battle of the Pyramids "forty centuries look down upon you." The Bible constantly uses this kind of appeal. There is some great question to decide: begin by putting before yourselves some stirring, relevant vision; so you will find yourselves more surely and broadly guided to a line of thought worthy of great issues. It is a most practical method of appealing to the centuries against the years, the Eternal against the temporal. One notable example is in Heb. xi.-xii. After enumerating the heroes of the past, "seeing that we are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses," in the light of that vision let us run the race, looking unto Jesus. Estimate the value of your lifetime, the intensity of high endeavour to which you should key it up, in vivid realisation of this multitude of loving watchers, whose sight must have been purified, whose interest in great human issues

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obeys Him. We tend to correct this by an opening hymn, which should be of the "vision" type. In the Liturgy the vision is suggested by the special collect, epistle, and gospel; it is then set in the background of the worship of "angels and archangels and all the company of heaven" at the canon; and culminates in the *Gloria in Excelsis*.

must glow more deeply now that they have passed into the land of after death. One summary of the Christian life is, "We endure as seeing Him Who is invisible."

It is instructive to notice that this use of the stimulating vision is not so much to urge us, "Do not be wicked," but rather "Do not be narrow." Do not be content to make up your outlook from a set of ideas true enough, but not the whole truth; to be so satisfied with truths that we cease to hunger and thirst after truth, more truth, the whole truth, the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ. In the realm of endeavour, do not be content to fill your life with duties and occupations that are innocent, but are not big enough and exacting enough for what the Giver of Life meant you to undertake. One can have "a little truth shut in and much shut out"; it is possible to be a "heretic in the truth," as Milton says. It is possible to live lives in which man can find little fault and God can find little fruit.

Sometimes the vision propounded in a psalm is clearly enough indicated for us to see it at once. In lxviii. the opening words are quoted from the story of the Ark in the wilderness: "Let God arise, let His enemies be scattered." At once all men would understand. We are to think today as in the presence of the God of the Exodus, just as if an English orator began a speech with "England expects every man to do his duty," all thoughts would go back to Nelson. So in lxxxii., "God presideth in the divine council; in the midst of the gods He judgeth," we get a vision

parallel to that shown in Job i. Often, however, the vision was so obvious to the original users of the psalm that it is taken for granted, and we have to search for it by small indications and perhaps obscure allusions. It is labour well spent. When puzzled by the original text, we having the fuller knowledge that has come through Christ and human history may often read into the Psalms meanings wider than they could have meant at the time of composition. Such gains we by no means relinquish. But we would also extract all the meaning they had when lips first quivered with them in God's Temple, and minds and hearts thrilled with an utterance that was felt to be new and God-given truth.

The special vision propounded for a psalm, usually in its opening ode, may be suggested by the actual sites in view, through which its procession is to pass. But it may also be a mental procession, sending the thoughts through scenes of the past, as a Christian on Good Friday may summon the vision of Calvary though far away from Palestine. A psalm like lxxviii. goes through scene after scene, but that is for the instruction of the young. We are concerned with the selection of one vision upon which to concentrate. This use of vision in the Psalms deserves fuller treatment than can be given here, by some master in the study of prayer and worship. But some suggestions may be made.

The Use of the Vision.—Some psalms give the vision without even drawing a moral—just exult in it (xciii., xcix., cl.). Some give a vision and draw, or

at least indicate, a moral (xii., xcvii.). Sometimes we have a vision, appropriate prayer and worship, and a concluding vision (xcviii., ciii.); sometimes vision after vision (lxviii.); sometimes a concluding vision only (lxix.).

THE SUBSTANCE OF THE VISION.—What was it that to the Hebrew worshipper was above all *tremendum et fascinans*?

1. Sometimes, though less often, it was a *topic*, an enigma (lxxviii. 9; Israel, once triumphant, is today defeated. Why? Xlix. 5: the days are evil; the wicked triumph; can we repulse fear?); a vice (xxxvi.); a virtue (ci.); the joy of pilgrimage (cxxxiii.); the horror of exile (cxxxviii.); the joy of release (cxxvi.); the confidence of the righteous (xxxvii.); a coming "golden age" (lxxii.).

2. Very often it is a vision of *the world as it is*, full of "darkness and cruel habitations," of enemies and danger; look out on this, then at once turn to God our refuge (lxix.).

There is a danger in this line of thought, which starts from our own needs and then looks to God as a source of supply for them, and the Psalms are not free from it. Sometimes the worshipper becomes so absorbed in the vision of his own woes that he barely remembers to detach his thoughts from them to the thought of God (lv., lxxxviii.; but see p. 56). Also, following this line, we are liable to think of Him mainly as a God of benefits; to think of faithful service ("I have worshipped no other God") as giving a claim to special protection that shall show itself in

prosperity (xliv. 17; lxxiv., lxxx.). We may come to test God's rule by the evidence of its benevolent manifestation towards us; to question it reproachfully when the worldly get worldly prosperity—can this be God's world after all? A too intent consciousness of our needs, with a touch of self-pity, may lead us to point out this world to the God of all mankind as a reproach against Him. Or even as a cause to doubt Him; the more tremendous men feel the sum of human needs to be, the less certain are they able to feel of the entire sufficiency of God (lxxviii. 19-21). It is a line of thought sometimes voiced, often felt, by men today; with 1,500 million people alive, can God attend fully to all of them?—as if there could not be "enough of God to go round." We accentuate this by our idea of a far-off place beyond the stars, heaven, where God is, a foolishness of which the Jew was never guilty. We are saved from this perplexity if we start from the thought of God, and go on to think of this little world held in His hand before His face.

Moreover, this starting from the vision of man himself among enemies leads on to a conception of a God of revenges towards those enemies, and may admit of prayers to God to harry them such as, in the Psalms, rightly grate upon Christian ears (xviii., lv. 23, lxviii. 21-23). We should in fairness remember that these Hebrew prayers were not individual utterances of private animosity, but the voice of a nation in a death-grapple. With the memories of the Great War so near us, we should not take up too superior an attitude. Xxxv. opens with a vivid picture of God

as an Achilles of the Jews, with all the Homeric details of routed foe, panic and slaughter: "Strive, Lord, with them that strive with me." Translate it into modern terms: "Lord, the treacherous enemy has planned this war—let it be him to be ruined; he has sown the sea with floating mines—if anybody's ships are to be sunk, let them be his; if anyone's wife is to be widow and children fatherless, let them be his. We have always wanted to be friendly with him; but he has had nothing but plots, envy, and slander for us." Surely, while we condemn the sentiment, and either cut out or spiritualise the words in using the Psalms, it will be with something of the feeling, "There, but for the grace of God, speaks my own Christian nation."

3. *Vision of the God of History* (xliv. 1, lxxvii. 11).—Most often it is the Exodus that gives the tonic vision; the deliverance from Egypt was, to the Hebrew, the nearest approach to what the Crucifixion is to the Christian—the set of events in the light of which he considered all the problems of his own day and life. This is most elaborately dramatised in lxviii. (Chapter XIV., p. 186; see also lxvi. 5-12, lxxxi. 5-7, xcv. 8-11, cv.). Often it is joined with its continuation, the settlement of the Chosen People in the Chosen Land, the vision of the God of Joshua and David (lxxx., cv., cvi., cxxxv., cxxxvi.); the latter vision appears alone in lx. 6-8 and in xliv. 1-4: "Our fathers have told us how Thou didst cast out the nations"; there the moral for the worshipper in his own time and for his own needs is clearly drawn (5-8): "Not in my bow do I

trust: in God we have ever boasted." The mood that is to be avoided is that of lxxviii. 20; God could and did help formerly—but today? "He smote the strong rock: . . . but can He provide bread also?" It is the same kind of comfort that the Christian claims from the thought of "Jesus Christ the same yesterday, today, and for ever."

4. *The Vision of God in the World Today.*—We must remember the crucial importance of these visions to the Jew. They were no mere historical or devotional exercise; they were not the meditations of the scholar or the Divine. They were, as they are not to us, the basis on which he decided his political and social action. On what he saw of God depended what he would do in a national crisis; his next splendid defiance of the power of Egypt, his next refusal of enticing alliance with Babylon; issues in which his whole national future was at stake. Should he resist when besieged? Isaiah answers the question with a vision (xxxvii. 22-32); so do the Psalms (xvii.: "driving me out, now they have surrounded me" (verse 11); the people have fled from the villages, as in Isaiah x.: now Jerusalem is besieged, but "in righteousness I behold Thy face, and am filled with the vision of Thy glory" (15). So it was all-important for the daily thinking of the Jew that he should be able to see God in the world of his own time. Lxxviii. 20 was wrong; what God did, God can do and does. The fool is wrong in saying "Shall God see?" (lxxiii. 11, x. 11, xciv. 7-10). Cxxxix. works out in complete detail the vision of a God to whom no human thought

or event is unknown: "Lord, Thou hast searched me out, and knowest"; the unhappy P.Bk. translation in 3, "Thou spiest out all my ways," tinges the whole with an idea of a God extreme to mark what is done amiss, noting our faults for judgment, from whom we would fain flee like Jonah. It should be, "all my ways hast Thou cared for." The psalm is a glad hymn of God's providence. "The thought of God's omnipresence would be appalling, if it were not that He is Love."

So in the Psalms we have visions of God as if He were actually in Zion (xi., xx., xxiv., lxxvi.), on Gerizim (lxviii. 15-16), on Hermon (xlvii., xlviii.), on Sinai (lxviii. 7-8). He is the righteous judge, provoked every day, and not indifferent, but putting down one and setting up another (xlvi. 8-11, ii., xi., xlvii., cxlvi.). He is warrior and avenger, a very anthropomorphic set of visions, as in xxxv. He is the "salvation" of Israel, not in a future life or in a spiritual sense, but for their national life amidst a welter of enemy races. God is the biggest fact in contemporary politics and life, the most real and active force in the actual life of the moment. The Jews put this to themselves not merely as a statement but as a vision. They had no difficulty about realising the presence of God. If God was real, then he is present, an awful living present Person. They could not think of God as a proposition, like Matthew Arnold's "the not-ourselves that makes for righteousness." They saw no difficulty in realising Him as at once in Zion and on high (xi. 4): "The Lord is in His holy

Temple; the Lord, His throne is in heaven." It was a set of Jews trained in this conception that were able to accept without explaining the fact of the Incarnation.

5. *The Vision of God in Creation.*—The Jew not only reasoned back from nature to the wonder and power of God (xix.), he also pictured God in the skies (lxviii. 33), "donning light as a vesture, making clouds His chariot, travelling on wings of wind," making winds His angels and the lightnings His ministers (civ. 2-4); sitting above creation (xciii.), and receiving the glad worship of all that He has made (xcvii., cxlviii., xcviii. 7-9). Of the magnificent visions of the God of heaven speaking through the storm we have already spoken (Chapter III., p. 75). The vision of God in nature is frequently joined in the same psalm with the vision of God in history (lxxx., lxxvii.). It possessed the minds of the leaders of Hebrew worship; it was for ever showing them new aspects, and dominated them by its glory and its implications of hope and comfort. In times of stress (and they were rarely free from looming danger), where a modern people would inspect its arsenals, they numbered their memories of God's mercies and their vision-pledges of His irresistible power.

6. *The Vision of God in Heaven.*—All these visions blend in and pass on into the vision of God in His own realm, in His essential being and majesty. There, in the earlier conception, He presides over the council of the gods who rule all the nations (lxxxii.), and "there is no Rock like our Rock, our enemies them-

selves being the judge" (Deut. xxxii. 31). Later conceptions of His glory made men refuse to give even this comparative equality to the no-gods of the heathen (Jer. ii. 11), and we get the vision of "satans" or adversaries who vainly try to influence God against His people (as in Job i.; Psalm cix., lxxi. 13). There He reigns as Lord of Hosts, surrounded by His angels and powers, as in Isa. vi. and Revelation, and Psalm cxlviii.: "Praise the Lord from heaven, all His angels, all His host." We miss the Christian further conception of the throng of the blessed saints; the psalmist could not have planned a picture like the Paradiso of Fra Angelico or of Tintoretto, nor have written the *Te Deum* praises of God. But do we not find a beginning of this idea in xcix. 6, where Moses and Aaron and Samuel are among those that call on His name, and in the *Benedicite*?

At the highest flight of their vision the Jews passed beyond these pictured visions of the courts of heaven, to the thought of God in His essential nature and being. There was comfort in the thought of God's Eternity, as compared with the transitoriness of man (xxix., 10, xc., xciii., cxliv.) and of nature (cii. 24-27). He is righteous and holy—let the state of the world "shriek against their creed" as it will; (xi., xlviii., xcvii.). He is steadfast and changes not; His promises stand sure for ever (xxxiii. 11, lxxxix. 35, cv. 8-10). The thought of Him and all His works is overpowering, as it was to Job (xlii. 1-6); it strikes man down in utter awe as the seer at Patmos: "When I regard Thy heavens, . . . what is man?" (Rev. i. 17;

Psalm viii.). It rebukes men's puny hesitations and reproachings, their challenges to God to prove Himself or be doubted (lxxiii. 15, 22). His thoughts are not as our thoughts, His ways are past finding out; but to realise this is not perplexity but peace. "His will is our peace." It is the vision of God which finds its completion in the opening aspirations of the Lord's Prayer.

CHAPTER IX

THE PREPARATION FOR THE GREAT MOMENT (*continued*)

Ritual Actions

Purification, accompanied by a phrase or ode enforcing the spiritual meaning of the outward action.

Prostration at the threshold of the holy area and at the altar before the sacrifice; accompanied by words making it symbolical of man's humble access, or of his misery and death, with summons-cry to God to "arise" and uplift man.

WHEREVER the worship was offered, there was a *ritual act of purification* on entering the Temple before approach to the altar. We may see this washing before worship in the Moslem today, in the Haram at Jerusalem. It is so essential that, if a man is praying in the desert and has no water, he may do it with sand: but purify himself he must before approaching God. But with the Moslem it is not part of his service: each does it for himself beforehand. The Jew, with far deeper spiritual genius, made it part of the service, and accompanied it with songs or sayings that brought out its spiritual meaning, and showed the worshipper he must be doing much more than merely washing hands and feet and lips: he must be cleansing soul and memory; must be facing a tremendous and searching ethical demand from the God he is to approach; must admit that trust in his own righteousness is futile; must be putting before himself a lofty ideal of purity,

and feeling awed at the contrast with his own stained life. The use of actual washing is a general and obviously helpful requirement (*cf.* Lev. xiii., and later, the Essenes, John the Baptist, and Christian Baptism). But always care was taken to remind the worshipper of its almost sacramental significance. Isa. i. 10-20 is a rebuke to the people who think that sacrifice itself is of power, without the purification of those who offer it (*cf.* also Isa. vi.). Ritual cleanness alone is useless. It is deeply significant that Jesus, when He was instituting that Sacrament which was to be the culmination of all O.T. worship and the centre of all Christian worship, preceded it with a very striking act of purification, to which He gave its spiritual interpretation.

All psalm-liturgies that were sacrificial implied this act; some, but not many, have their own special accompanying phrase to the ritual act of cleansing. In those that have it, sometimes the explanatory phrase is simple: (xxvi. 2-6, a self-examination ending in "I wash my hands in innocency"; lxxxiv. 11, "God refuseth no good to them that walk in cleanness"). The purification of a large number would take time, though the Temple arrangement of lavers was abundant: the phrase would be repeated over and over. Sometimes it was a more elaborate spiritual ode, not set for the occasion, but available for use as the accompaniment of this act on any solemn occasion. It is notable that at this point we sometimes get the denunciations of reliance upon sacrifice, so vehement in the prophets Amos, Hosea, Isaiah, Micah, Jeremiah.

Yet the prophets themselves loved sacrifice in its true sense, and the objections to it, as in li. 16, were to be used in an actual service of which sacrifice was the culmination, the great moment. The spiritualising words used with the act of cleansing naturally merge into the prayers of humble access, the next stage of the service. Here is seen the value of this flexible form of liturgy; it was ever open to prophetic additions of thought, and could, as the bad tendencies of the times demanded, admit new checks and rebukes of the mechanical and the superstitious into the very service itself. In xl. 6 the chastening correction is inserted at a different stage of the service, into the Praise-Song: "Sacrifice and oblation Thou lovest not: I am come to do Thy will."

The great example of a purification ode is li. It is not itself an order of service, but to be used when needed at this moment in any service, as we might use an appropriate hymn. It needs for us no interpreter but our own conviction of sin. But it may gain some interest from the imagination of its first use upon the hill of Gerizim.

The Act of Prostration.—Literally falling flat, lying prone, the forehead touching the ground—the humblest act of abasement to an earthly King, and to God. We read it of David (2 Sam. xii. 16) and in the dedication liturgy of Solomon's Temple (2 Chron. vii. 1-3), where there is a cry to accompany it. The Jews used it as a regular liturgical practice, and sometimes a psalm inserts appropriate prostration-cries, so that the worshipper may be sure to do more than the

outward act of bending the body. As the procession reached the threshold of the Temple entrance they prostrated. Lxxxiv. has a cry (verse 10): "I had rather be a threshold in God's house than a fortress in the cities of the godless"; and v. 7: "But I in Thy abounding mercy enter Thine House: I bow to Thy holy shrine in Thy fear." Then again at the altar at the moment of sacrifice, in the wonderful description of a service in Ecclus. l.: "Then all the people together hasted and fell down upon the earth on their faces, to worship their Lord, the Almighty, God most High." The general idea is obvious: the self-humbling of man, the exaltation of God; the same idea that lies behind the frequent phrase that earth is God's footstool (xcix. 5: "Magnify the Lord our God, and fall down before His footstool, for He is holy").

The Psalms abound in phrases to accompany the act of prostration and give it spiritual significance. The imagery connects itself with cries for God to "awake" or "arise," by contrast with man bowing down; these are very frequent; also to man's death or misery and God's uplifting hand. In the *Venite* (xcv. 6), "O come let us worship and fall down and kneel before the Lord our Maker"; cxviii., a psalm probably sung at the gate of the restored Temple, "I am not dead, but live and tell out the praises of God" (verse 17). The same idea, "we lie here as if dead," appears in xliv. 19-26, with its climax, "Awake, why sleepest Thou, Lord? Arouse Thee, nor spurn us for ever. Our soul is brought low, even

unto the dust: our belly cleaveth unto the ground. Arise and help us." Iii. 6: "Arise, Lord, save me, O my God." In lxviii., before the first sacrifice, the worshippers dramatise the story of Sinai: as our fathers there bowed low in awe, so do we at the memory (Chapter XIV., p. 188). Christian liturgies retain the same idea in the *Sursum Corda*.

Christian worship does not use the actual ritual of washing and prostration; therefore we should be even more careful to do the spiritual acts they were meant to evoke and help; intense awe at the presence of God; the deepest energy of horror of sin and ambition after purity; all that we can imagine in the heart of Peter when he fell down before his Risen Master on the shores of Galilee. The beautiful English version of the *Anima Christi* that appears in our books of devotion is a worthy Christian successor of this impressive element of the psalm-worship.

Soul of Jesu, make me holy,
Make me contrite, meek and lowly.
Holy water, stream that poured
From Thy riven side, O Lord.
Wash Thou me without, within,
Cleanse from every taint of sin,
Till my soul is clean and bright,
Bathed and purified and white,
As a ransomed soul should be.
Miserere, Domine.

(*English Hymnal*, 89).

CHAPTER X

THE PREPARATION FOR THE GREAT MOMENT (*continued*)

The Moment before the Sacrifice

Final preparation by humble access, creed in the form of "comfortable words," absolution. The Jew rather pleaded needs than confessed sins. All needs were brought to God at the altar; sickness, national danger through war or enemy magic. Psalm xxii.

THE great moment is coming near. Disciplined by the systematic self-preparation, cleansed and ready, the worshippers form round the altar for the climax, the coming of the Presence, the Glory, the Bounty of God, the Shechinah. Again, they prepare themselves by creed, prayers of humble access, and absolution. The expression of the service here is usually dramatic; they are not speaking about God, but to God. "O God, we are needy: O God, you are bountiful, mighty, steadfast—not moody, not to be cajoled nor mastered by charms. Your Church declares it, pledges it, applies it to us in absolution." There are whole psalms for use at this stage, from which those arranging the service could choose, as we choose hymns. Many of these referred to special needs, particularly that class of psalm which pleaded for God's protection against enemy charms and spells (*e.g.*, xci.). There are shorter odes, special to a service, or for selection as needed, especially those introduced by the words, "How long?" In xlii. 11-15 is a

beautiful short ode at this part of the service: "I will say unto the God of my strength, why go I thus heavily? The enemy cast me in the teeth, 'Where is now thy God?' Why art thou so vexed, O my soul? Trust in God." There are also frequently short cries inserted in a liturgy, beginning with "Alas": cxvi. 16, "Alas, Lord, for I am Thy servant"; cxviii. 25, "Alas, Lord, save now: alas, Lord, deliver now."

It will be instructive to see what kind of God the worshippers state that they believe in, and, as He is that kind of God, what kind of need men can plead to Him. Creed and Humble Access are intimately connected. The Prayer of Solomon (1 Kings viii.) gives a summary of the needs that were appropriate to plead in public prayer at a sacrifice.

The Jewish Creed.—Perhaps creed is the wrong word to use. We do not find any condensed index to their belief; it makes us realise our Christian privilege, to have one set of historical facts that can be recited, round which our beliefs centre. The creed we find in the Psalms is parallel to that which could be gathered by taking the opening phrases of our collects, where we attribute some quality to God, in view of which we can confidently put some petition before Him; plus the *Te Deum* and *Gloria in Excelsis* and "Comfortable Words" from our Liturgy. Our Creed states facts; true, there is an exultant ring in the Nicene Creed, but the aim is to state facts with all possible safeguarding accuracy; the glow is inherent in the facts—they are wonder-facts, glory-facts, ecstasy-facts, what someone has called radium facts—

but first insist upon stating them as prosaically as possible, insisting that they are facts. It was so in the first Gospel records. Their writers were stirred to the heart by the facts, but how rarely does even a restrained expression of what they felt break through, as in John i. 10-11 !

But the Jew at this stage of the liturgy did not recite a creed, he proclaimed " comfortable words." This is done by titles of honour. God is approached as " salvation," " rock," also He is the God of history, as in the opening visions ; God of Abraham, Jacob, and Moses. He is gracious and merciful, a God of forgiveness, a God who bears our burdens. One thought evidently full of comfort to man that is so transitory is that God is eternal : " He is God of old, and to all ages : my days are like a lengthening shadow. But Thou, Lord, abidest for ever. He shortened my days. But I said, My God, Thy years endure to endless ages." This passage ends with the exquisitely beautiful illustration from nature : all shall change, " but Thou art the same, and Thy years have no end " (cii. 11-12, 23-27). The same thought appears in cxlvi.

Humble Access.—That being the kind of God we have, now let the worshipper state his need, in humble though confident pleading. When we come to read the Psalms with their original meaning, we find here that Christian experience has added to their meaning something that is to a surprising extent lacking in the original—namely, the sense of sin, and the craving for the contrite heart. It will be found that the Jewish worshipper pleaded his needs, his desolation, rather

than his sin; and the boon he craves is removal of the distress, restoration of God's favours shown by renewed prosperity, like Job's (*cf.* xli. 11). It is true the words of the Psalms are ready for the Christian meaning, and we instinctively find it there, but it took the teaching of Jesus about sin, the standard of the life of Jesus, the setting up of the Cross by which man judges his conduct, to bring Christian contrition into the human outlook. There are high ethics in the Psalms (as in xv., xix., xxiv.); there is truly spiritual penitence in li. and xxxii., but on the whole the Jew approached with humble pleading of his needs rather than confession of his sins.

Needs that are Pleaded.—(*a*) "Lord, I am sick—heal me." Vi. and xiii. might be called masses for the recovery of the sick: "Pity me, Lord, for I languish away: heal me, Lord, for my bones are vexed. All of me is vexed sore: but Thou, Lord, how long? I am weary with my groaning: each night I wash my bed with my tears" (vi). Xiii. begins with four "How longs?" all pleading suffering, followed by the prayer, "Lighten mine eyes that I sleep not in death." There is no idea here of the "death of sin" nor of soul-sickness. It corresponds to the intercession for the sick in the Church Militant prayer of the Anglican liturgy, but has nothing to resemble the second prayer in the Visitation of the Sick: "Sanctify this Thy fatherly correction to him, that the sense of his weakness may add seriousness to his repentance."

(*b*) "Lord, I am in danger: rescue me." In the Psalms, it is always something bigger than a man's own danger that is concerned in his prayer. It is

the nation, and God's cause and God's honour, that is threatened. The prayer is for someone who is of value to God's cause, offered by the congregation. May I apply this to the prayers offered by the Church at home for its workers overseas? These tend to be so gloomy, as if their life was all danger, trial, and sickness. Yet there are few classes of people that have such zest in their life, such joy to be where they are, as missionaries. The last thing they would wish is to be spoken of in sentimental admiration or pleaded for in terms of gloom. The dangers are real—broken men and women do come from the front, and in their spiritual stress too they need our prayers. Let us bring their names and needs to God's altar, pleading our unity in their work, their need as ours, and God's mercy.

(*c*) Protection against the unseen powers of evil—against the warring of principalities, powers, spiritual wickedness in high places. To the Jews this evil seemed very real; against it they felt very helpless. Their enemies had gods of a sort, and set them in motion against God's people by charms. So there are psalms which are counter-charms, like xci., and have been used as such in Jewish history down to recent times. The attack took the shape of some calamity, or led the righteous man to do some act that made God punish him. Even the Christian religion has not yet entirely eliminated the natural tendency to the counter-curse (see Chapter IV., p. 84), to which the Jew yielded. As in cix., "He loved the curse, so let it come to him: be this the reward of my satans from the Lord: let his prayer become sin." He wanted by his curse to set a godless man over me, God's

people; to make my days few, my children orphans, my family vagabonds, seeking and searching among ruins. Well, let our God make it all happen to him. May strangers spoil his land, not ours: may there be none to pity his orphans: may his name be blotted out. At least it was a patriotic retort, not a personal vindictiveness.

If we omit the counter-curses, we have in these psalms very beautiful prayers for God's protection against the agencies of evil, from all dangers that may happen to the body, and from all evil thoughts that may assault and hurt the soul; prayer for some help we must have from Him—how can we face life without it?—put in the shape of a "comfortable word" assuring us that we have it. "He giveth His angels charge over thee to keep thee in all thy ways. In their hands they shall bear thee up" (xci.). God is God. Name any evil you know, tell Him any fear you feel, He can and will protect you. Perhaps we are not afraid enough today of the angels of evil.

There is one psalm that is a supreme example of a man coming to God in absolute need. Every single fact of his situation is shouting to him of ruin and despair. He has no resource left: nothing is worth talking about except God, nothing worth doing but to plead his need to God's mercy. This psalm (xxii.) has been specially consecrated for us by the Lord whom we approach at our altar; not only did He repeat it in His moment of deepest need on the Cross, but His Passion so reproduced its details that it reads as if written for the Crucifixion: "My God, why hast Thou forsaken me? I am a scorn of men, despised

of the world. All that see me mock at me, shoot out the lip and wag the head: 'Turn to the Lord, let Him deliver him if He will have him.' They gaped upon me with their mouth, ravening and roaring lions. All my bones are out of joint: my strength is dried up, my tongue cleaveth to my lips. A mob of the wicked hemmed me in. They rent my hands and my feet, they stare, they gaze at me. They part my garments among them, and for my vesture they cast lots."

At this point came the sacrifice, and it is most notable that the suppliant then breaks out into a cry of joy and certainty of rescue. This is not a psalm of despair, but of certainty in God despite the very worst that the world can show. "All ends of the earth turn to the Lord and worship, and all tribes of the nations bow down before Him. For the kingdom is the Lord's, who ruleth over all." We have no resource but God—yes, but what more do we need? "It is weakness in strength that I cry for." The Christian in his humble access must go further than the Jew could, in eliminating all idea that he has deserts, in any reliance on self-righteousness or strength. There is not, and could not be till Jesus had lived, anything in the Psalms to parallel our Christian "prayer of humble access," surely one of the most wonderful achievements of human language. Then we shall be ready when the great moment comes, when the fire of heaven comes down upon the sacrifice, when He opens the windows of heaven and pours us out a blessing that there shall not be room to receive.

CHAPTER XI

THE GREAT MOMENT

The Sacrifice

Description in Ecclus. l. The coming of the fire was a certification that God hears and answers. The "Selah." The "fire-cry," using its symbolism to illustrate God's dealings with Israel, and with Israel's enemies. Instances of fire directly kindled by God; the ordinary sacrifice—fire not less "sacramental" to the worshipper.

AT last the great moment comes. Pilgrims, worshippers, priest, levites, High Priest, are arrayed in order before the altar. All have done their best to be worthy to be there, so far as man can be. They have purified themselves without and within; the priests have put on holy robes; the whole congregation has steeped heart and mind in awe of God, memory of His might and glory, and of the great days of old that showed them. They have banished all idea of self-righteousness before God.

The moment of sacrifice was meant to be one of rapt ecstasy and exultation, but it was systematically planned out on quite a formal scheme of worship. There is the offering of the sacrifices, as in cxviii. 27, where "bind the sacrifice with cords at the horns of the altar" is a rubrical direction: then the call to God to come, to be present, to show His glory, to hear and answer, perhaps with processions round the

altar* (*cf.* xxvi. 6: "I encircle Thine altar, Lord"), and with another act of prostration. There is a hush of tense silence, then the coming of the fire, the pledge of His acceptance of the worship. Out bursts the shout of assurance: He answers, He comes! "In a pillar of smoke He speaketh unto them" (xcix. 7).

The most elaborate descriptions of great sacrifices are the bringing up of the Ark to Jerusalem (2 Sam. vi.), the Dedication liturgy of the Temple (2 Chron. v.-vii.), and that of Ecclus. l. Let us picture the latter service, remembering that the great altar was not in a church but in the open air, in the midst of a spacious court. The High Priest comes forth to the altar from the sanctuary (5), puts on the sacrificial robe, and goes up the altar steps (11), receives the portions to be sacrificed out of the hands of the priests, the sons of Aaron (12), who stand round him, before all the congregation. He places them on the altar (13), he stretches out his hand for the libation-cup, and pours the drink-offering at the foot of the altar (14-15). Then the whole congregation calls upon God to hear, a great shout,

* Early Christianity in the East, when wishing to honour a holy site, regarded processions round it as essential. So they were ready to cut the site about until it was unrecognisable, to make a processional path round it. This happened to the Holy Sepulchre: a scoop was made in a hillside, leaving what had been a cave to stand as an *aediculus* in a flat circle. Processions round the Sepulchre are a feature of the "Holy Fire" service: that service so maligned by English Christian visitors, with a complacent arrogance quite unmatched. To read such comments shows why we are regarded abroad as the Pecksniff among nations. As if England was so superior because the Palestinian gets excited over his religion, while the Englishman keeps his excitement for a football match!

with trumpets (16). The people fall prostrate in awe, until the sacrifice is crowned by the coming of the fire (17). Then comes the exultant praise-cry, the final blessing, and another hymn, on which Luther based the chorale, "Now thank we all our God."

The same liturgical scheme is to be seen in the story of Elijah's sacrifice on Carmel (1 Kings xviii.): the call to God to answer, the answer by fire, the prostration of the worshippers. It is instructive to note also that the same scheme of worship underlies the approach to God as made by Elijah and by the priests of Baal. This shows the merit of this flexible, adaptable, human scheme of worship: every advance in knowledge and conscience can be fitted into it, every superstition eliminated from it. There is a world of difference between the prayer of Elijah and the "O Baal, hear us" and the frenzies of the priests. So the same liturgical framework has been able to fit in the revelation of Jesus and the experiences of the Church, and serve for the Christian Eucharist. It will be able also to open itself to the production of characteristic worship by new Christian nations, bringing out their special gifts and gathering up their richest culture. The Christian liturgies have been chiefly the product, and a rich product, of the mind of the Greek and the Roman. The Church has yet to draw upon the mind that produced the Vedas and the Ramayana, and overhear the heart of China, Japan, or Africa in its own expression of repentance and exultation, drawn on to its own fulfilment by the experience of the love of Christ.

In the Psalms the "Selah"* indicates the great shout of summons, the call to God to hear and come, though all psalms are not furnished with rubrical and musical directions. A good illustration of the service perhaps is the "Holy Fire" at Jerusalem, stripped of some of the unworthy features that have crept in, as they did into Christian fairs in England. There is a tense stillness, then a great cry at the appearance of the fire. Along with the shout, in the psalm liturgy, there might be used a cry to God, in which often the simile of the fire that is to appear on the altar is spiritualised. These furnish some of the best-loved texts in the psalms: "Make Thy face kindle on Thy servant: save me in Thy love" (xxxi. 18); "Lord, lift Thou up the light of Thy countenance upon us" (iv. 7); "Thou that dwellest between the cherubims, shine forth: show the light of Thy countenance and we shall be whole" (lxxx. 1-3); "God of revenges, shine forth" (xciv. 1); "God is the Lord and He lighteneth towards us" (cxviii. 27); "They looked unto Him and were lightened, and their faces were not darkened" (xxxiv. 5). Such phrases are numerous, and almost invariably occur at this point of the service. Psalms xlii.-xliii., originally one psalm, illustrate almost every stage of the liturgy, and have a wonderful fire-cry: "Send out Thy light and Thy truth, let them lead me, and bring me unto Thy holy hill and to Thy dwelling: that I may go unto the altar of God,

* Not all Selahs are sacrificial moments, nor are all sacrificial moments indicated by a Selah. Dr. Peters gives a more rational interpretation of them than is found elsewhere ("The Psalms as Liturgies," p. 41).

even unto the God of my joy and gladness: and upon the harp will I give thanks unto Thee, O God my God" (xlii. 3-4). Fire was naturally one of the most frequently used, and most fertile in suggestion, of all similes to the Hebrews. Their daily life included sacrifice by fire; their history included the Exodus (with the story of the burning bush, the pillar of fire, and the lightnings of Sinai) as its most-pondered incident; their country was every year swept by such impressive storms.

When the simile of fire comes in the opening vision of a psalm, it is usually the God of the Exodus that is in their minds, or the God that rides upon the storm, as in xcvii.: "The Lord reigneth: fire goeth before Him; His lightnings have lightened the world." So it is made an illustration of the awe and power of God, or of His "jealousy" and stern punishment of Israel's faithlessness, or of His swift vengeance on the heathen. He is (as in Deut. iv. 24) a "consuming fire," a God who sendeth out arrows to consume them, hailstones and coals of fire (xviii. 12).

When the simile occurs at the sacrificial moment it has a variety of meanings. It stands for the might of God, especially as coming to judge. "Out of Zion, perfection of beauty, God shone; fire burneth before Him, about Him storm rageth. He calleth to heaven above and to earth to judge His people. Heaven declared His righteousness, that God,—He is judge" (l. 2-6). It symbolises His saving power in lxxx. 3, 7, 19: "O God, turn us; let Thy face shine, that we be saved." Above all, it stands for His light and guidance

(xcvii. 11, xlii. 3-4). On the other hand, it is also interpreted of God's hot wrath and aversion to their enemies: "As fire burneth the forest, so dismay them with Thy storm" (lxxxiii. 14); "rain on them coals of fire" (cxl. 10), but oftener it is His wrath upon faithless Israel (lxxx. 4, lxxiv. 1). Both use the expressive phrase, "Why smoketh Thy wrath against our prayer?" (lxxxix. 46, lxxix. 5). Cxxxii. carries it further, to be a picture of the crown of God's anointed King: "I have ordained a lamp for thine anointed, His enemies will I clothe with shame, but upon him his crown shall shine bright" (Wellhausen) or "glitter" (Driver; verse 18).

The Answer by Fire.—The flame shoots up upon the holy altar towards heaven, and out of their full hearts the cry goes up, proclaiming: "He is here: He answers: He grants our prayers." The worshippers make the gladdest, most emphatic, assertion of the bounty they are to receive: it is assured; speak as if you had already received it. "Light is risen for the righteous, and joyful gladness for the true-hearted" (xcvii. 11). The fire-cry in iv. 6, which is a prayer, passes at once into a proclamation that it is answered: "Thou hast given gladness in my heart, more than at the time of their corn and their wine." This will explain some of the abrupt transitions and apparently contradictory statements in the psalms. We may have a liturgy for a time of invasion and defeat, or for a man in sore sickness, or a humble access pleading deepest need. These are the facts of the case: suddenly comes a statement that all is well—this is the

answer that is sure to come. Xiii. is a good example, beginning with four "How longs?" of one in danger of death, and ending (5-6) with exultant thanks for assured recovery. The transition in xxii. has already been noticed (p. 143) from utter misery, which is the actual condition of the suppliant, to a certainty of vindication of his faith that can be spoken of as already accomplished (27-31). The Jew could not always attain to this faith. Many of the psalms for times of distress go on with the pleading for mercy after the sacrifice, but in a great number of cases the assurance breaks out—surely a heroism of faith. We want to realise all the fulness of meaning that the altar fire had for them, for we, coming to our Sacrament, have reason for all that and more. Thousands upon thousands of times it happened, that leaping up of the flame on the altar, at all kinds of services, in all kinds of place and circumstance: in the heroic days of the wilderness when (Lev. ix.) Moses said: "Today the Lord will appear unto you," and Aaron burnt the offering on the altar, according to the ordinance, and Aaron lifted up his hand and blessed the people, and the glory of the Lord appeared unto all the people, and there came a fire out from before the Lord and consumed the offerings upon the altar, which when all the people saw they shouted and fell on their faces. In the days of David (1 Chron. xxi.) when "David built the altar on the holy rock of Zion, and offered burnt-offerings and called upon the Lord: and the Lord answered him from heaven by fire upon the altar." It happened day by day at the

morning and evening sacrifice through centuries of stirring history: at great festival services, on days of humiliation and prayer, at a countless number of sin-offerings and peace-offerings. The priest prepared the sacrifice, the priest kindled the fire, and the people took it as the pledge of the presence of God.

But sometimes—a few times—in that long history we are told that God Himself kindled His own accepting flame, shone forth in His own manifesting fire from heaven, without human intermediary agency in kindling it. Sometimes it was in fire upon the altar of a shrine; so it was with Elijah's sacrifice (1 Kings xviii.), so perhaps with the sacrifice that called Gideon to be God's deliverer of Israel (Judg. vi.), so in some mysterious way the angel of God used the flame of the sacrifice of the father of Samson (Judg. xiii. 18). More often and even more impressively God manifested Himself by fire other than altar-fire to Israel: in the bush of Horeb that burned and was not consumed (Exod. iii.), and the pillar of fire that guarded them from all the might of Pharaoh (Exod. xiii. 21-22), and at Sinai when "the holy mountain burned with fire, and the Lord spake out of the midst of the fire, and they heard a voice but saw no form, that they might learn to fear Him all the days they should live on earth, for the Lord is a consuming fire" (Deut. iv.).

We find that the Jews speak in almost the same language about the fire they kindled after the ordinance on His altar, and the fire that He Himself kindled on these special occasions. They were no less certain

it was God's fire, though man kindled it. They were just as sure that God came to them then, as effectually, as actually. It was in the truest sense a sacrament to them—an act that man performed, as God commanded, and therefore God used and accepted. When Jesus gave His Sacrament to be the centre of the worshipping life of His followers, He was giving the fulfilment of what God had been teaching His people through all their history.

Their Vision at the Sacrifice.—So they had an elaborately careful ritual of what man should do, but only as a means to something that God would do. The sacrifice and its liturgy must be "acceptable"—the best, most careful, most appropriate that man could work out, nothing slipshod; but while their eyes saw the offering of a sacrifice on the altar, their minds and hearts passed far beyond that, to see the Vision of the Mighty God, the God that sitteth above the cherubim—the God of Sinai, the God of Elijah, the God of Gideon and David, the God of might against Egypt and every enemy, the God who demanded holy approach from His worshippers.

And they shouted, and fell on their faces.

The Christian sacramental act is changed to something simpler and more beautiful than the burning of flesh, something with more direct teaching about communion with God and comradeship with one another. We can have all the certainty that the Jew had, and more. Our communion is concentrated for us on one occasion in the life of Jesus, which we

can dramatise and of which we can make each communion a memorial: we "show forth the Lord's death until He come." We have His command to do this in remembrance of Him. Christian experience has proved the promise attached to the command, the practical value and the abounding joy of sacramental life. We can see all the Vision the Jew saw, and far more; not only the God of Sinai and Zion, but the Transfigured Jesus whom Peter saw, the Ascended Jesus who appeared to Saul, with light above the brightness of noon sun; the Triumphant Jesus who said in Revelation, "I am He that was dead, and am alive." Not only God seated above the cherubim—vague, awful symbols of the storm-powers of heaven—but Jesus amid the angels and archangels and all the company of heaven. We have got far beyond a memorial of something He once did, we have a means by which He, the same Jesus, does something now for us, as really as when in bodily presence He passed thoughts and impulses and heavenly strength into the lives of those who were His companions then. Let us beware lest we come to our great moment with less of prepared devoutness, awe, exultation, and faith than the Jew of the Psalms.

CHAPTER XII

AFTER THE GREAT MOMENT

The Praise-Song

The Jewish worshipper would not depart without praise; not merely thanks, but attribution of honour to God, prayer that His name be hallowed world-wide, and self-admonition about character by the worshipper of such a God. The Psalms culminate in praise-songs; most exultant of human language, only equalled by Christian hymns. Sometimes several sacrifices each with its praise-song in one liturgy. Short praise-cries; sentences; odes; litanies; refrains; sequences of psalms forming one liturgy, for an octave or for a procession. Climax in the "Halleluia Chorus," cxlv.-cl.

WE do not realise how hard a literary task it is really to praise, to achieve the expression of feelings at the climax of such a sequence as we have followed, to say something worthy of the God towards whom our feelings are stirred. Ecclus. l. has a splendid phrase, "the perfection of exultation" (verse 11). The Psalms achieved it; their only rivals are Christian hymns, which is as though one said the only rival of a beautiful mother is her beautiful daughter. Human language of praise, perhaps, comes to its height in the hymn of the West, *Te Deum Laudamus*, and of the East, *Gloria in Excelsis*.

By all the discipline of their liturgy the hearts of the worshippers on Zion had been worked up until nothing seems worth thinking about but praise, and praise that is not merely thanks—there must be a bigger thought in it; not merely how good God has been to us, but His nature, His very being, Himself.

So comes the feeling, (*a*) we cannot be satisfied till we have found the outlet of praise: no man is complete till he can praise God. But more than that, (*b*) we become jealous for the honour of God—hallowed be His Name. Such a God is worthy of the praise of the whole human race; the tribute of honour is too small until all the earth offers it; there must be no human praise that goes to any but Him. So the praise-songs that end so many of the psalm-liturgies have a special appeal to the missionary church, for they reflect our missionary ambition, which is more than mere duty to obey a command, more than merely "love" for our fellow human beings. It is a longing for God to have due honour. We do not only want God for all the world, we want all the world for God. The simplest definition of Christianity is, that we share the ambitions of Jesus, and we know what they were. "Let everything that hath breath praise the Lord." The best example in the Psalms is the *Deus Misereatur* (lxvii.), but it appears constantly, in spite of the contrary feeling of wishing that God shall smite and annihilate the other peoples: "Let all the earth bow down to Thee, and chant to Thee, chant Thy Name. Come and see the wonders of God. Bless our God, ye peoples, and sound the voice of His praise" (lxvi. 4-5, 8). Compare also lxviii. 31-35, lxv. 5, xxiv., xxii. 27-31, and the introductory psalm to the great Alleluia Chorus which ends the Psalter (cxlv.-cl.): "All flesh shall bless His holy name for ever and aye." And, very strikingly, in the doxology that concludes Book II.: "Let the whole earth be filled with His glory. Amen, and Amen" (lxxii. 19).

Their hearts singing with such thoughts, yet they retained their liturgical genius and good sense, and they set about framing a deliberate arrangement to make themselves praise-full. They must get it into words, this leaping out of their souls towards praise, this jealousy for God's honour. They must achieve language that will "rise to the height of this great argument," a methodical, practical attempt at ecstatic worship. In the Christian attempt to do the same, the West has much to learn from the East. It is characteristic of Western hymns that they say, "Let us praise God," and of Eastern that they set to work to express the praise.

The Jew said, "Let us have a recognised part of our service where we praise; not there only, but there essentially, worked out with every varied provocation and appeal to praise." At a point in the service of 1 Chron. xx., "David said to all the congregation, 'Now bless ye the Lord': and all the congregation blessed the Lord, the God of their fathers." Similarly, in Neh. ix. 5 the Levites said to the congregation, "Stand up and bless the Lord your God from everlasting to everlasting: and blessed be Thy glorious name, which is exalted above all blessing and praise." Then follow themes of praise from history, of "our God, the great, the mighty, the terrible God, who is God alone." So in Psalm xxvi. the phrase appears: "In the congregation I bless the Lord." The Jewish worshipper never allowed himself to depart without this. In primitive services probably it consisted of short staccato phrases of blessing; later it was developed into rich variety, odes special to a psalm, doxologies,

collections of praise-psalms from which to select, praise-liturgies, and finally the glorious sequences of praise which include as many as ten psalms in one liturgy. There seems little doubt that at one period the proportion of penitential psalms was felt to be too great, and this is corrected in Books IV.-V. As it stands, the Psalter is most fitly called a book of praise; its Hebrew title is *tehillim*, "a word from the same root as *hallel*, familiar to us in the form Halleluiah" (Peters). Its best motto would be its last verse: "Let all that hath breath praise God."

Short, sharp praise-cries appear at the close of some psalms: "Let them shout, yea let them sing" (lxv.) In lxxxvii., as it stands, the verse following the Selah is short; literally (singers and pipers together): "All my fountains are in Thee." This is a rubrical direction followed, it seems, by the first line of an anthem. The habit of quoting anthems by their first line (as we should say, "Sing the *Veni Creator*") has set some pretty problems to the translators, who were determined to make continuous poetry of all they found; we shall see this especially in lxviii. (Chapter XIV.). The short cries develop into sentences: "Blessed be God who hath not rejected my prayer, not averted from me His face" (lxvi.). So they pass on into ode and anthems within the psalm itself, special for that liturgy; for example, cxviii. 28-29, lix. 16-17. In lxviii. we have three sacrifices, each followed by its own praise-cry (9-10, 20-23, 33-35). Cxvii. is a praise-cry that has become detached from the preceding liturgy (cxvi.), to which it is the climax. One delightful example, which gains much by literal translation, is xlvii.

5-9 : " God is gone up with a shout, the Lord with peal of trumpet. Chant unto God, chant ye ! Chant unto our King, chant ye ! For God is king of all the earth. Chant (and repeat) " ; go on singing till you really *feel*.

There are also collections of praise-songs that might be selected as required for any service, and these are among the best loved of the Psalms. " O Lord our Lord, how glorious is Thy name in all the world " (viii.) ; " The Lord reigneth, clothed in majesty " (xciii.) ; cxiii. and cxiv., which begin with the Halleluiah, Praise ye the Lord. I would suggest that some of the ethical psalms were also used at this stage, for frequently the service concluded with a warning to the worshippers about conduct acceptable to God (p. 224). This is especially so with the " psalms of the conscience," the Bethel collection (*cf.* lxxi. ; the Selah comes after verse 7 ; and notably l. 16-23). A psalm like xv., the " gentleman " psalm, is not itself a liturgy ; it would come happily to the lips of worshippers at the climax of their joy in God. Each of the first four books, and some of the collections of psalms, have doxologies, which sometimes appear in the text of a psalm, but were for general use (xli. 13, lxxii. 19-20, lxxxix. 51, and cvi. 48) : " Blessed be the Lord God of Israel from everlasting to everlasting. (And let all the people say, Amen. Halleluiah.)"

The litany form of worship was a favourite in the Psalms ; whereas in Christian worship it is used chiefly for penitential petition, the psalmist found it particularly suitable for congregational praise. The great example is cxxxvi., itself not a complete liturgy but a praise-cry after the sacrifice. It quotes God's

wonderful works in creation (4-9), His might in the Exodus, and in the conquest of the Chosen Land (10-22), and possibly in deliverance from the Babylonian captivity (23-24). It is a series of short statements, with the same response to be made after each, "For everlasting is His love." The statements are mostly quotations from other psalms, from Isaiah, Jeremiah, Deuteronomy, Exodus, already familiar, carrying memories and associations as well as their meaning. This has an advantage for kindling the feelings—for instance, if in our devotions we quote the phrase "gallant and high-hearted happiness," it has not only its own beauty, but recalls the gallant life of its author, R. L. Stevenson. This suggests a method for the compilation of litanies of praise for our occasional services. (Milton's paraphrase of this psalm keeps the litany form, and is a favourite hymn—"English Hymnal," 532).

The crown of the Hebrew effort to praise God was the great sequences of psalms in the final book. Israel knows its blessings; it will sit down before them and number them like jewels: gloat over them one by one; there shall not be one reason for praising God left out. Every praise-fact we have, every wonder-fact of history, every glorious attribute of God—lay them out in order, rhapsodise over them, set them to shouts, to flute, harp, sackbut, psaltery, dulcimer and every kind of music. It is the greatest human attempt ever made to reach George Herbert's frame of mind

> Not thankful when it pleaseth me,
> As if Thy mercy had spare days:
> But such a heart whose pulse may be
> Thy praise.

Psalms ciii. to cvii. are the summons to the pilgrims, come from all four quarters to Jerusalem for festival, to offer their thankofferings; it is the culmination of the pilgrimage (cvii. will be more fully treated in Chapter XVII.). They are one liturgy. Each psalm begins with a caption: "Bless the Lord, O my soul, and all that is within me bless His holy name"; "Bless the Lord"; "Give thanks to the Lord"; "Halleluiah"; "Give thanks to the Lord." Then come the compelling reasons for man's praise: for His character—loving-kindness and mercy (ciii.); for His power and love as creator and preserver (civ.); for His dealings with Israel (cv.); all the more wonderful because of Israel's failures (cvi.); therefore, pilgrims from all four quarters, each with their own special local experiences of His protection, provoke one another to emulation in one exultant act of massed praise (cvii.).

The Psalter ends with the most completely exultant sequence of all (cxlv.-cl.), to be used at the morning sacrifice. "Halleluiah" rings out again and again, as in Handel's chorus. The Lord is Eternal; the Lord is Creator; the Lord reigns for ever; not the poorest escape His loving mercy, not a star nor a blade of grass but speaks of Him, and angels and the host of heaven take up the refrain. Israel knows it well: young men and maidens, old men and children, join in the praise. Everywhere, with every accompaniment of moving melody, for every reason, in every breath, let us with angels and archangels and all the company of heaven bless and magnify His glorious name.

Let everything that hath breath Praise the Lord.

PART III

General Remarks.—On what grounds can we allot particular groups of psalms to particular shrines of origin?

ALLOCATION OF GROUPS OF PSALMS TO MOUNT GERIZIM, DAN, AND BETHEL

IN Part II. we saw the value of reading the Psalms as orders of service. Our task in Part III. is to read those orders of service each in the home of its origin. The value of this should go far beyond the mere providing of illustrations for a verse here or there.

In the following chapters certain collections of psalms have been allocated to different homes. Without entering into a full explanation for following Dr. Peters in these allocations, a short summary may be given of the line of thought, that the reader may make his own tests, especially if he has personal knowledge of Palestine.

1. The whole Psalter, as we have it in our Bible, found its final home in Jerusalem. It was the Book of Common Prayer there in the time of our Lord.

2. But the whole Psalter did not originate at Jerusalem. It is a collection of hymns ancient and modern. There were several great centres of worship for Israel, from the time when the Ark found its home at Shiloh to the concentration of central worship at Jerusalem. Moreover, psalmody continued as a living art, neither

sweeping away the old nor fearing the new, in the very spirit of the preface "Of Ceremonies" in our Prayer Book. The Psalter gathered treasure-trove from all the homes and all the centuries.

3. If we fit the Psalms into the background of Old Testament life, and think of the book of Temple worship growing with the growth, quick with the life of the Chosen People through all their crowded centuries of education, we shall surely regard it as probable that psalmody grew, concurrently yet independently, at each great worship centre. There came a time when the three shrines of the North lay abandoned and ruined. Jerusalem alone was left where a pious Jew could dwell among his brethren and worship his God. All that was best in the liturgies of all the shrines would be gathered, selected, and adapted there. The refugee from Dan or Bethel brought with him his hymn treasures, as those of Constantinople in 1453 took with them that which began a Renaissance in the West.

4. Scholars and students of the Psalms tell us that the process we have felt to be natural has certainly happened. There are psalms that had their origin in Northern Israel. I must again disclaim any qualification that would give me a right to form personal opinions about questions of Hebrew scholarship. Nor will I summarise the scholarly arguments here. They turn on such points as the use of different names for God (JHVH and Elohim and others), the prevalence in some psalms of references to Jacob and Joseph, Tabor and Hermon, or local landmarks such as

Jacob's Well. As set forward by Peters and others, the whole argument is weighty, reverent, and constructive. One of the chief objects Peters had was to show his fellow-scholars that, accepting all the legitimate lines of critical study, yet criticism had taken a fundamentally wrong turning in reading and dating the Psalms as historical poems referring to individual events, and in reading them without intimate knowledge of their home country. Much that seems irritating and barren in "higher criticism" would thus be avoided. It is quite unnecessary to deprive us of the joy of feeling that we can repeat authentic psalms that were on David's lips. More than that, we can probably also use psalms that were used by Elisha and the spiritual heroes of the North.

5. One important point, often overlooked, is that the Psalter is not merely a collection of individual psalms, but is a collection of collections of psalms. These collections are indicated by their headings—Psalms of the Sons of Korah, Psalms of Asaph, Prayer of Moses the Servant of God, Songs of Degrees, and so on. In allocating the Psalms to their homes of origin, we should deal with them by groups. If some indications in some Psalms of Korah point to a definite home, that carries with it all the psalms of the collection, though some of them may show less trace of it. This is important, because the gathering up of psalms at Jerusalem was not archæological; they were freely adapted to be really useful in their new home. We should expect them to show both traces of their origin and traces of their adaptation. The name of

God might be changed. Rubrics might be substituted adapting the procession to a new route, with appropriate odes for the new surroundings. This radical adaptation has happened especially to the second group of Korah psalms (lxxxiv.-lxxxix.), though they are undoubtedly of Northern origin.

6. Having established by scholarly reasoning that there are three groups of psalms of Northern origin, those of Korah, Asaph, and the Prayers of David the Son of Jesse, can we go further and allot each group to a special home? There were three Northern shrines—at Dan, Bethel, and Mount Gerizim. Will the three groups fit home, each to a shrine?

Here it is the turn of the man who knows Palestine, and reads the Psalms attentively in their own country, to offer his contribution, remembering with due modesty that such witness can only be suggestive, not clear-cut proof. If, following certain indications, we tentatively assign a group of psalms to one shrine, and then find that all our reading of them fits them happily into those surroundings, some progress has been made.

One thing helps us. The thoughtful visitor to Palestine quickly discovers that there is no generalised Palestinian scenery; the differences between the surroundings of Dan and of Jerusalem, of Beersheba and of Samaria, are amazing in so small a country. The history has varied with the geography; to pass from the Shephelah to Galilee is to pass into a different world of events. If, then, the Psalms are not abstract religious poetry, but are rooted in the soil, taking

colour from their surroundings, rich with the very speech and thoughts that would be naturally suggested to people worshipping on this or that very site, then we should expect to find that the liturgies at each shrine have distinct characteristics, reflect the scenery, draw their moral from the historic scenes whose sites were before their eyes.

7. Let us apply this test. Take first the Psalms of Korah. Quickly we begin to feel confident. Those constant references to water, both as life-giving spring and as dangerous and battering torrent; the prayer for the rock-footing; the vision of God in the mountain, these fit Dan supremely well, but do not fit Bethel at all. Shechem has abundant springs but no torrent and no morass; its prevailing vision is of God in the skies. Combining this with the scholarly arguments that Peters adduces for identifying Korah with the Levitical priesthood of Dan, the case seems convincing. We allot the Korah Psalms to Dan, and the more we read, the more we feel that the allocation passes the test.

We have two shrines left and two groups of psalms. Apply the landscape test again. The collection of David the Son of Jesse has a very detailed picture of a harvest (lxv.); it represents a terraced hilltop, with trees amidst the grain, meadows and wadys below, shading off into wilderness land (see p. 74). This is certainly not Bethel; it very delightfully is Samaria. The Psalms of Asaph have nothing about harvest, but much about vintage; this looks like Bethel. References that suggest a view of the Jordan Valley;

to the children of Lot as inveterate enemies of the children of Abraham (lxxxiii. 8); and an elaborate comparison of ruined Israel to a vineyard (lxxx.), seem more in keeping with Bethel. Following these indications, and reading on, one little thing after another seems to make us feel more at home in reading the Asaph Psalms at Bethel, the David collection at Gerizim.

These may seem small matters thus clumsily set down. I can only wish my readers the happiness of conning their psalms with their eyes on the very scenes. The feeling grows at each sacred site: "For the hearts that framed these psalms, this was home."

CHAPTER XIII

THE TABERNACLE

The era of David resembled that of Elizabeth for England; sense of power, sudden development, expectation of great future. David did for the Church what he did for the State; a progressive conservative. The Ark stood for the old ways of worship; significance of bringing it to Jerusalem as a symbol of God taking possession; traditional worship now brought to full dignity in a settled home. Psalmody thereafter continued to be "psalmody of David."

Tabernacle worship reflected especially in Psalms iii.-xviii. Vision, God on high and in Zion; Israel battling, triumphing, and to triumph. Fulfilment of the thought by Jesus.

WE usually think of the Psalms in connection with Temple worship, and it is perhaps easiest to see the liturgical structure of the inspired Hebrew approach to God in its most developed form. But there were great days in the Holy Land before Solomon built the Temple: great moments of danger and deliverance when to turn to God would seem the only thing worth thinking about, and men of "fire-eyes" and spiritual genius to direct that approach. Surely we would wish to enter intimately into the worship of Samuel and David, to feel the spiritual pulses of God's people at Shiloh and Mizpah, and their thoughts when facing the long struggle for existence against the Philistines. What were the public prayers and praises that built up the courage of a simple-minded forthright hero like Jonathan? To

regard the Psalms as lyrical poems produced each for a historical occasion may demand that they shall be dated later than David : there is no doubt whatever that they reflect circumstances of later history. But if we are right in regarding them as public liturgies for worship, not single poems, but orders of service, arranged on a plan of humble access, summons to God to be present, cry of assurance and song of praise after the acceptance of the sacrifice, then we see that they were open to adaptation as needed, yet remained the old liturgies. Glad worshippers going into Nehemiah's restored Jerusalem might well add a new praise-cry to an old liturgy, with the appropriate imagery from ruin and restoration, but we are not compelled to date the whole psalm by that. The stories of the sickness of Hezekiah, or the taunts of Assyrian Rabshakeh, might well add new lines indicating contrition, or confidence, to old services for the recovery of the sick, or for appeal to God in times of siege, but the old remains. This wonderful flexibility was a divine inspiration. We look on the Psalms, not as originating from this or that special occasion, but as the kind of approach to God needed by God's people on this or that kind of occasion that was constantly happening, either in the annual calendar of feasts and fasts, or in the cycle of vicissitudes that befell the nation. Men were constantly falling sick—liturgies were needed long before Hezekiah ; invasions of the Holy Land were chronic—liturgies for use when Zion was foe-begirt before the eyes of the worshippers ; orders of service on the hillside before a battle, and

thank-offerings after victory were needed long before the Exile or the Maccabees. The old framework of approach to God, so simple, so ready to let the heart frame its own utterances as well as finding support in those that encouraged the forefathers of the race, was the same for the Tabernacle days as for the Temple. The psalter may be compared to the Temple itself: age after age enriched it and enlarged it; but it was the same holy Moriah, with worship on the same lines offered at the altar on the same holy rock.

In a very real sense the Psalms are psalms of David. It would surely be distressing to feel with some critics that, "so far from asking whether the Psalter contains post-Exilic psalms, the question is whether it contains any pre-Exilic psalms."* But if our psalms are orders of service for typical national moods and needs, and if their framework is the primitive way of approach to God, then we can see all their long process of development, passing through the tremendous era of David, the political upheavals of civil war, ruin, exile and restoration, the moral and spiritual reformations led by the prophets and Josiah, as a building up that does not sweep away the old. The Psalms go back as far as the needs and moods go back. It was a true tribute that was paid in naming this method of worship after David; his age put the old worship into the final shape which it kept, and why may we not believe that his own personal genius was the decisive factor? The age of David was for the Hebrews something like that of Elizabeth for our own race. There are eras when

* Wellhausen.

the people of a nation seem to be doubly alive—things literally go to their heads; they suddenly speak, plan, wonder, and achieve with a capacity that is almost miraculous, and they produce individuals whose characters are the summary of the race's powers, the highest exhibition of its possibilities. Such epochs generally need for their production a great patriotic crisis, such as the struggle with Persia was to Greece, that with Spain to England, that with the Philistines to Israel. If from such a struggle there result victories that give a new sense of power, dramatic and thrilling episodes of heroism, and a consciousness of taking a new status among the peoples of the world, an animation and impetus shows out which seems to crystallise ages of growth in the past, and leaps forward in swift rushes of development all at once. But such eras do not make a clean sweep of the past, rather they find latent possibilities in old and venerated institutions—the new transfigures the old. So it was with the Greek and Elizabethan drama. The work that David did for the age which he led and represented was that of a progressive conservative. His work for the worship of the nation was similar to his work for its political and military development, and it all crystallised around the capture of Jebus, the bringing of Jerusalem into the life of Israel. The capture of impregnable Zion went to the head of Israel, as nothing else did. Its capture was an era; its possession was henceforth almost a symbol of the protection of God. The vision propounded in the earliest Jerusalem psalms is, most frequently, that of enemy hosts prowling fruitlessly

round Zion's fortress, and the people within calm in security and plenty, with God in their midst.

David and his people felt an accession of new God-given zest and vigour, which finds expression in striking phrases in Psalm xviii.: "By Thee I break through a troop: by my God I leap over a wall . . . the God that girdeth me with might, giving me feet like the hinds: my arms have bent a bow of bronze: mine ancles wavered not." The same outbreak of exuberant power extended their territory, enriched their trade, widened their philosophy, federated their tribes, planned their Temple, and ordered their worship, just as the two or three generations in sixteenth-century England, that expanded its empire and crowned its literature and philosophy, also reformed its religion, and produced its Prayer Book and Authorised Version of the Bible.

Now at last all the traditional worship could, they felt, be brought to its full dignity and development in a final home, a "city of abode." It is significant that the great event that originates this development was the bringing of the Ark to its new home on Zion. The Ark stood for the old ways of worship: to make its return a national festival, its establishment on Zion the symbol of God taking possession of His new home, was a declaration that all new developments were to be on the lines of the old religion. One cannot imagine that the old liturgies, the cries to God of their forefathers before that Ark, would be completely abandoned. Nor need there be any such revolutionary development as that of Shakespearean drama

from the miracle-play. The framework of worship was so flexible and adaptable that the new could be readily added to it: each new advance in spirituality could find outlet in the praise-cry, the marching-song, the ethical motto for acts of prostration and purification. Hebrew worship, as developed by David, was ready to be the national worship for all time. Liturgies continued to be "liturgies of David."

The question of dating psalms, then, becomes for us the dating, if we may and care to, of this or that part of a liturgy. But if we could find some that we feel confident remained with little change as they had been used in tabernacle worship in David's time, they would be of absorbing interest. I propose to rely on a decision of Dr. Peters's, and take Psalms iii. to xviii. as being, on the whole, of this character, and see in them the worship of that creative, vivid period of abounding vitality. Xviii. is headed "A psalm of David, the servant of the Lord, who spake unto the Lord the words of this song in the day that the Lord delivered him from the hands of all his enemies and from the hand of Saul." We must beware of thinking that the headings are part of the inspired text; they were mostly the work of loving commentators, who delighted to find that such and such a psalm fitted an event in national annals as if it had been written for it. But Peters (himself one of the sanest and best-equipped of critics) says: "There seems no reason why we should not take the heading of this Psalm at its face value. It was a triumphal hymn to celebrate the victories of David, with feasting and sacrifice,

composed by him or under his name in his time. And (for reasons he has given) I think we may assume that the dating of this psalm carries with it a very early date for all the psalms from iii. onward."

These psalms are of simple and obvious structure, very beautiful, and for a varied set of moods and occasions. Iii. and iv. are for morning and evening sacrifice; v. a preparation-service for priests about to officiate; vi. and xiii. are for the sick, poignant and tender; and xvi. is a thanksgiving service after recovery. Services in times of invasion and danger are frequent (xi., xii., xiv., xvii.), and thanksgivings in impregnable Zion are ix.-x. (really one psalm). The favourite "gentleman" psalm (xv.) was ready for the worshipper grateful to God and longing to serve Him wholly. Vii. goes deep into the conscience that is not satisfied with mere compliance, but recognises that there must be progress in moral sensitiveness and knowledge: God must punish unwitting sin, if men are not pressing on to know better. Xviii. is the summary of the lessons of one of the most eventful lives ever lived—David, who began as a shepherd boy when his nation was ruled by a local sheikh, and whose son was accepted as husband for a royal princess of the greatest world-empire of the day.

These psalms usually begin, as the others do, with an opening ode, propounding a vision in the light of which men are to take heart and face life and its problems. We know that worship was processional at that time, though it is not until xxiv. that we find a psalm that obviously indicates a procession—the

bringing of the Ark to Jerusalem (2 Sam. vi.). The ritual act of purification had its special accompanying cry only in xviii., an elaborate ode (20-27). In two psalms the sacrifice-cry uses the simile of the fire (xiii. 3, xviii. 28). The act of prostration, breaking naturally into the summons-cry to God to arise and help, and then at once into the cry of assurance, that the help is as good as granted, is a feature of all these psalms that are sacrificial: iii. 5-6, iv. 4 ("speak in your heart as ye lie, and be still"); v. 7 ("In Thy abounding mercy I enter Thy house, I bow to Thy holy shrine in Thy fear"); ix. 19, x. 12, vii. 5-6. Vii. contains a series of cries of assurance, quoted by their first lines only (see Chapter XII, p. 157; *cf.* lxviii. 12-14): (*a*) the righteous God tries hearts and reins; (*b*) my shield is God, who saveth the upright of heart; (*c*) God is a righteous judge, and a God that avengeth daily. Many of the psalms end with their own praise-cries, often connecting back with the opening ode (iii. 8, iv. 7-8, v. 11-12, vii. 17, xii. 7-8, xiii. 5-6, xvi. 5-11). There is a praise-song for general use when needed (viii.). Some of the concluding songs of praise contain advice to the worshipper as to the demands of holiness (xv. might be used for this purpose), also good wishes for the nation, and evil wishes for the enemy, pronounced in a tone of assurance of prayer; in xviii. the moment of sacrifice is indicated by the fire-cry, "Thou art my lamp, O Lord, my God that lightens my darkness" (28); and the final ode contains all the three elements mentioned above.

Psalm iii. gives a clear indication of the procedure of worship. It consists of four symmetrical stanzas, each of two verses. After verse 2, verse 4 and verse 8 is a "Selah"; after verse 6 is a refrain-cry, "Arise, Lord! save me, O my God!" This would be for use at each of the four sacrificial moments, and it takes the place of a Selah where it occurs. It was the tabernacle morning hymn, at Jerusalem, at a time when wars were incessant. The opening motif indicates the national need and the national reliance on God (1-2); the joy of that reliance comes next (3-4); the calm trust that it brings (5-6); the ill hap of the enemy concludes it (7-8). The evening sacrifice is on similar lines (iv.): an appeal to God and a reproach to Israel's enemies, the "sons of men"; such phrases as "the proud," "the haughty," "men of this generation," refer to the national enemies; Israel is "the poor," "the needy," "the holy." Then comes a Selah, followed by a declaration of God's love, a prostration (4), and another "Selah." The main sacrifices are now offered (5; *cf.* cxviii. 27), and the fire-cry, "Lift on us the light of Thy face, O Lord" (6), indicates the moment of the great sacrifice. Then comes the song of joy before quiet sleep: "Thou hast put gladness into my heart, more than at the time of harvest and vintage. In peace forthwith I lay me down and sleep, for it is Thou, Lord, only that keepest me in safety" (7-8).

Psalm xviii., as a liturgical example, as a summary of the lessons of life, and for its personal connection with David, deserves a special examination. It begins

with a half-verse caption, "I love Thee, Lord, my strength." Then it opens the psalm proper with a great roll of names of honour for God, and exults in the worshipper's resulting safety (2-3). Next comes an act of prostration with accompanying memories of past dangers (4-5); 5 is a hunting metaphor: "nooses of hell enringed me" (Wellhausen). The sense is, "storm-beaten and hunted, I lay as if dead." This is followed by the summons-cry to God to be present at the sacrifice (6). Then comes the magnificent picture of God in the might of the storm and the fury of the irresistible warrior who comes to help (6*b*-10). The purification follows with its moralisation (20-27). Then the moment of sacrifice is indicated by the fire-cry (28-29). The concluding ode of praise is a great *Te Deum* of God's glory—the strength He brings to our help, the strength He instils into us to help ourselves, the completeness of the certain victory that will come to the servants of His cause, the worship He will win from all the world (30-50).

When we remember the Davidic times, we can understand that this would be the vision put before worshipping Israel in the services of their time. The danger of His chosen people, the majestic power of God who is both on high and also in His new earthly dwelling (xi. 4), and the safety of the fortress-rock of Zion, blend in a picture that referred to no ideal world, but "came home to men's business and bosoms." The favourite titles for God are rock, fortress, refuge, salvation; He is both earthly warrior (vii. 12-13) and heavenly power. The thrill of feeling that they could

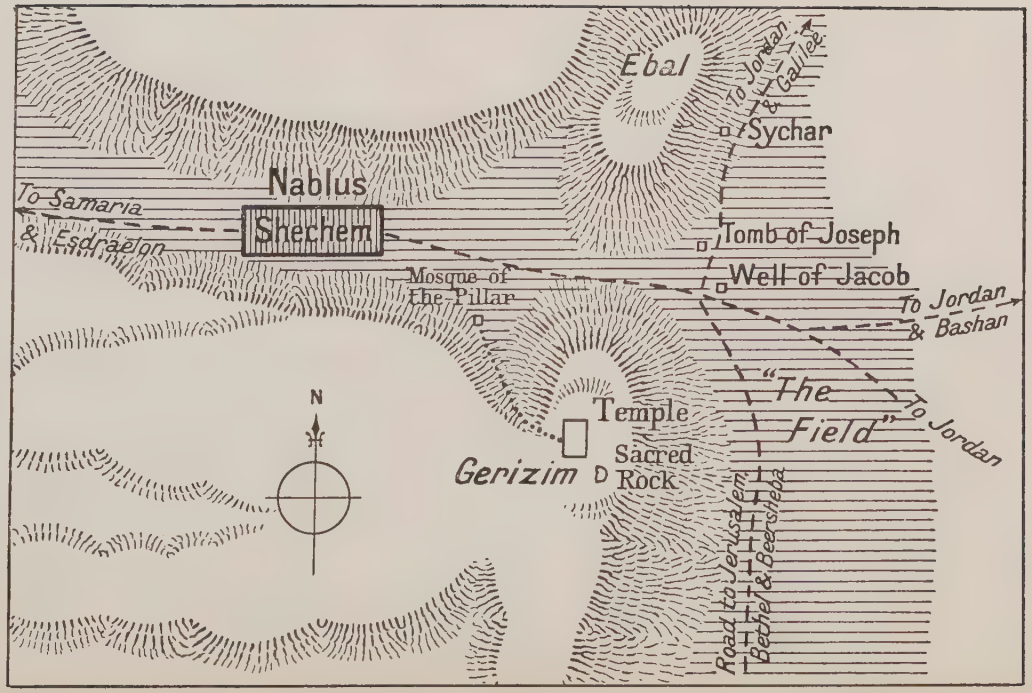
capture Zion, and that no one else ever would, leads to constant pictures of its comforting strength (ix. 14, iii. 6, for example; viii. 2, "Out of the mouth of babes and sucklings Thou hast ordained a stronghold to still the enemy," looks like a reminiscence of the Jebusite boast [2 Sam. v. 8]; "They thought they could hold it with cripples: we can make it a place where our children can grow up in praises of God").

The Fulfilment of the Thought of these Psalms by Jesus.—One of the great inspirations of a people in such an era as that of David is the feeling that their race is only at the beginning of its development and destinies. The last thing they would claim is that they know all, have done all. The golden age lies still ahead, all the world shall yet be the domain of their God, the sphere of His people, the kingdom of His Anointed King. So those psalms are full of phrases which Christians find themselves applying to the rule of the Son of David. The Jews, not accepting the transference of these glowing expectations to the Church of Jesus Christ, can find in them only a sad commentary on their later history. The promises of God from this time centred on two things, which were to Israel symbols and pledges of the glory yet to be, outward and visible signs of God's saving power: without these two it seemed almost impossible to continue to believe in God's power exercised for them. One was the anointed King, of the seed of David; the other was the holy Temple. They had to readjust themselves to the absence of a king after the Exile; they have had to readjust to the loss of Zion and

Palestine since the times of Titus and Hadrian. But for the Christian the old phrases of promise are not a whit too big; the joy of their assured realisation still rings through them. They meant not less but more than they said. "A people that I have not known shall serve Me. Strange races do Me homage: at the hearing of the ear they hearken to Me. Therefore I will thank Thee, Lord, among the nations" (xviii. 43-44, 49). The kingdoms of the world are become the kingdoms of our Lord and of His Christ.

For the followers of a Jesus who bade us love our enemies, there is obviously a correction to be made in the tone of these psalms about hostile races. Here is a fulfilment which is a drastic correction. To these worshippers other peoples were all foes, and a vocabulary of abuse is lavished on them: they are fools, brutes, liars, cringers, ambushers, idolaters, enemies of God. It remained for other Jews of later time to see that the worship of a God of all mankind must involve something of brotherly feeling to all races. Even Isaiah cannot always rise above the idea that the golden age of God will mean universal dominion for the Jew (Isa. xi. 14). In these early psalms the imagination revels in the varied sufferings that the foe will undergo as a sign of the completeness of God's victory: God will smite them, terrify them, exterminate them and their cities root and branch, beat them as dust before the wind, trample them as mire; ix. 14 is a most vivid verse, of which our translation misses the point: "Slay them by Thy hand, O Lord, slaying them, appointing them their portion with the beasts.

Fill their bellies with Thy blast [blow the sirocco down their throats !] till their sons be sated and their babes eat their remnant." We face this meaning, because it shows the almost inconceivable change of attitude towards other races which the teaching of Jesus has brought. Race-comradeship is God's plan and desire; race-antagonism, colour-hatreds and contempts, are the counsels of the devil, and in our age, when all the races of the earth are in touch with one another, it is the supreme question that affects human destiny. Nothing but the teaching of Jesus, worked into the outlook of the peoples who know Him, dominating all their thought and policy towards others, can save mankind. How inconceivable to the old psalmist would have been that saying about China: "Instead of talking about the Yellow Peril, why not speak of the Golden Opportunity?"


Ebal
To Jordan & Galilee
Sychar
Nablus
Shechem
To Samaria & Esdraelon
Tomb of Joseph
Well of Jacob
Mosque of the Pillar
To Jordan & Bashan
"The Field"
To Jordan
N
Temple
Sacred Rock
Gerizim
Road to Jerusalem Bethel & Beersheba

PLAN

To illustrate the situation of Mount Gerizim, and the processional route of Psalm lxviii.

If Elisha worshipped there, he would see historical sites that even in his time went back over 1,000 years. Abraham and Jacob, coming from Mesopotamia by Transjordania, probably arrived by the road marked to Jordan and Bashan. Joseph coming from Beersheba asked news of his brethren from a man in "The Field." Joshua brought Israel up from Bethel. Just inside the narrow eastern entrance the valley widens into a natural amphitheatre about half a mile wide, by a wady running up into the hill on each side. Here Israel would gather to hear the Law read, the blessings from Gerizim, the curses from Ebal (Josh. viii. 30-35). Here, too, would be the gathering of the men of Shechem by Abimelech (Judg. ix.); the pulpit rocks from which Jotham spoke his parable overhang the plain on the south, and furnish easy escape for the orator. Here Israel gathered to hear Rehoboam's arrogance, stone his chancellor, and rend the kingdom (1 Kings xii.). Our Lord on His visit was coming from Jerusalem, possibly by way of Jordan, and would pass on to Galilee through Sychar, the village of the woman who met Him (John vi.).

From the summit can be seen Hermon, the Mediterranean, the hills of Benjamin and Judah, and eastward Bashan and the track by which God brought Israel from Sinai.

CHAPTER XIV

MOUNT GERIZIM

Psalms li.-lxxii. originated here probably. Variety of these psalms. Historical and natural surroundings. Typical psalm, lxviii.: a psalm of triumph; its vision; its pilgrims from North and South; its processional route; its three Selahs. Use of women-choirs. Anthems quoted by first lines. Fulfilment of its thought by Jesus as He sat at the foot of Gerizim by the Well of Jacob.

THERE can be few more inspiring natural scenes of worship than the site on Mount Gerizim, overlooking Shechem. It has every feature that uplifts the human heart to God—a glorious and extensive view, which has been almost lyrically described by Tristram and Dean Stanley, a sacred history that goes back far beyond that of Jerusalem. Today it is the oldest scene of continuous worship that the world shows—the Samaritan Passover is still held there. Its Temple was probably an open-air shrine, with a sacred rock as at Jerusalem, but with only an enclosure, not an elaborate building. Here the heart of Israel felt God speaking in nature, from snowy Hermon, and the dew that fell from it, and the storms that swept down from it; from the fertility of the richest valley and best wooded slopes in Palestine; and in historical association. Here it developed a psalmody that speaks to and for the heart of mankind today.

No wonder that its service-books offered adaptable treasure for use at the Temple worship in Jerusalem.

Contents of the Psalm-Book of Shechem.—The Psalms of Shechemite origin are li.-lxxii. (For the reasons for this and other allocations of psalm-groups to their original homes, see pp. 161-6.) They are a varied collection, including penitentials (lxi., lxxi.), supplications in times of threatened or actual invasion (lv., lxiv., lii.), and just before battle (lvi.), in defeat (lx.), and in triumph (lxviii.); services for the morning sacrifice (lxiii.), for the first-fruits (lxvii.), for vintage (with some savage wishes for the foe, suggested by the red feet that were treading out the grapes [lvii., lviii., lix.]). Lxxii. is a psalm that lends itself happily to Messianic hopes; lxxii. 18-20 is the most beautiful of psalm doxologies. This collection has furnished one psalm that is used for daily Christian worship, the *Deus Misereatur* (lxvii.); Israel never more completely won free from thoughts of privilege, or hatred of other nations, than here. Lv. gives the pathetic picture of the wounds of a faithless friend; lxv. 9-13 is a picture of a rich harvest such as could hardly have originated anywhere in Palestine but in Samaria. Li. has put into words the deepest feelings of the contrite heart.

Illustrative Psalm (lxviii.)—*The Place.*—Two ridges rise abruptly several hundred feet above the plain, with a rich, narrow valley between them about a mile and a half long. Each ridge ends to the east in a rounded summit, Ebal and Gerizim. The eastern entrance is narrow; beyond it is the plain ("Muknah")

where our Lord saw the fields "white unto the harvest." Inside the entrance the plain is broadened by a wady running back into each hill. In the widened valley on the south side stands the "Mosque of the Pillar" today. It was in this broad stretch that Israel gathered for the reading of the blessings and the curses (Josh. viii. 30-35). It may be of interest to note that the acoustics have frequently been tested, by Warren, Tristram, and others; the Bible event as described proved quite possible. Here also Joshua made his final speech to Israel (xxiv.). Possibly here Abraham set up his altar (Gen. xii. 7), and Jacob later buried his teraphim (Gen. xxxv. 4). The Well of Jacob is just outside the entrance, and the tomb of Joseph. The village of Sychar is close by, on the eastern slopes of Ebal. For the service of Psalm lxviii. the worshippers would muster at the site now marked by the Mosque of the Pillar, below Gerizim, up which they would climb, after the opening service, to the Temple on the top.

The Occasion.—It is evidently a time of prosperity and victory. King and people are in a mood that with us in England would send the King to a public thanksgiving in St. Paul's. They must have a great, satisfying service; gathering into it all that we would include in secular as well as religious manifestations—the religious gathering, banquets, fireworks, hurrahs, demonstrations, leaders in *The Times*, feasts for the tenants and the poor; something that will express their feelings and drive home the lesson of it all. There must be processions (organised, but not too much so),

with route marked out, and recognised stopping-places, where trained choirs will sing anthems, but also catch-phrases for marching-songs, and times when the whole company may let loose all its feelings in shouts and cheers, selahs and alleluias. When a people is excited, its primary wish is to move about in crowds waving something in its hands and shouting something in chorus. In the East we may add that they will wish to hold one another's hand and to dance in rings. If they are good-humoured, it will be sword-dancing; if excited against someone, clubbings and killings. Also there must be solemn sacrifice, and sermon, and a feast that unites them with the deity and with one another. There must be music, chiefly of a massive, open-air kind. One important thing will be the liturgy of the day; either one that is traditional for this kind of occasion, a *Te Deum* with past associations to make it still more thrilling; or one composed for an occasion felt to be unique. Lxviii. is a liturgy for a great day; that is the setting in which it was first used. Let us attend the procession, and see what they did, what they saw around them, what they said, and what they were trying to say.

The Vision for the Day.—Like many psalms, it is dramatic: the people summon up before their minds some picture or series of pictures, and sing anthems or shout phrases that are dramatic with regard to those pictures (Chapter VIII., p. 122). They will give a cry that someone in the picture, God or hero, might be supposed to utter to someone else in the picture, or to this assembled gathering, or to the world of

mankind. If we do not realise this, phrases are often puzzling; they are abrupt in occurrence, or in transition, or in connection with what went last or comes next; they change from "he" to "I" and back again. The congregation would understand; they were caught up in the mass-mind; they needed no explanations, and often the psalm gives none. We will not find it always easy, but well worth while, to grasp the vision; to realise the original setting will help us; there is much to learn about the psalms by pondering them amidst the very landscape of their first use. But their visions are puzzling. The Hebrew mind did not try to make its picture "fitly joined together." Western artists make quaint work of it when they try to *draw* the visions of Ezekiel or Daniel or the Apocalypse. These are not pictures but visions; not clear and connected but overwhelming, essential, thrilling, glorious, ecstatic; yet not visions of a fancy world, but unveilings of the flaming heart of history and truth and invisible fact—the fact of God. It is history seen by flashes of lightning; but real history rightly seen by heavenly lightning.

So in lxviii., in their minds there was a series of pictures. We are here today, exultant, standing on Gerizim, the mount of God. Glory be to God on high; we *see* Him—not here, but riding on the heavens above us (34). How came we here? We *see* our long, triumphant progress—Egypt, wilderness, Sinai, manna (5-10); glory be to the God of our victories (19). We must stop and sing anthems about this, lots of them. But it is not merely our triumphant progress,

it is God's; we *see* Him, at Sinai, on Bashan, coming to Gerizim, and now ascended again on high, His people established, His plan completed, His agelong purpose secured. It all goes back to that; we *see* God, majestic in the heavens, ruler of earth from its beginnings (33). He had an ambition for all the peoples of the earth; He did not stay on high, He came to earth to work out His plan—came to Sinai, to Gerizim. He would found a chosen people, lead them through a chosen education, establish them in a chosen land. Through them all the people of the earth should be blessed, should attain to the worship of the true God. Through the chosen people's victories God would rebuke the presumptuousness of those who trusted in human power or in false gods. God would thus win them, for His own glory, for Israel's peace, for their own well-being. Now at last it is made certain; Israel shall have all the promised land, as it can be seen from Gerizim—Bashan to the sea, Hermon to the South, Judah to Naphthali; and (see verses 31-32, but most clearly in the companion Psalm lxvii.) all the earth shall know Him, fear Him, praise Him. Glory be to God on high. The final picture is of God riding the clouds (as in 4 He is pictured "riding the desert" during the Exodus, mistranslated there "rideth upon the heavens"), thundering, in majesty, might, and awe (33-38), and all the kingdoms chanting to Him (32).

The Progress of the Service.—The procession musters at the foot of Gerizim, where so many things had happened (p. 184); where Abimelech's mob had

heard the first parable (Judg. ix.); where Rehoboam fled and the kingdom was torn in two (1 Kings xii.). The noise hushes; and the opening words give the keynote of the day's celebrations: "Let God arise and let His enemies be scattered"—the Ark song (Num. x. 35). Back go all thoughts at once to the Exodus, just as our thoughts go to Bethlehem at the *Gloria in Excelsis*. The Ark song—and here we stand by Joshua's pillar; how suitable for today's celebrations; let us have an ode upon this (2-3): God's power, man's powerlessness to resist. This was so—instances prove it. This is so today—our victory proves it. This always will be so—build on that in facing any situation; it is an established foundation fact of life, proved once for all, and for ever unquestionable. Therefore (4) "sing unto God, chant His name." Then drive the conviction home by instances—the triumphal progress of God's host—the deliverance from Egypt (5-6*a*); the vain opposers of the desert (6*b*); 7 is an exclamation: "O God, when Thou wentest through the wilderness!" what days they were! And so it serves as a summons to God: "You came then at Sinai; come to us now"; and the Selah follows, marking the first sacrifice. The story is dramatised; the people bow before God as if they were at Sinai on that day with all its awe (8). The thought goes on to the manna (9: "With a rain of free-will offerings Thou besprinkledst Thine heritage") and to the quails (10: "Thy beasts that dwell therein Thou providedst in Thy bounty for the needy"). Peters points out that the word translated "Besprinkledst"

(A.V. "send rain") is the technical liturgical term for heaving or waving before the Lord the part of an offering not to be burnt. So, as in the prostration above, the service now being performed is linked up with the story. We today make our offerings to Thee—free-will offerings, something outside the usual supply, as the manna and the quails were outside Thy usual gifts through nature; we give in the same spirit that God gave to us in the wilderness.

Second Part of the Service: Verses 11-23.—The service at the opening station ends; the second part is to be on top of Gerizim. Its opening words are instructions for music to be rendered by the choir of women (11). The procession has first to climb Gerizim; anyone who has had the experience of doing this will understand why the choir that sang below will not be in shape to sing again for a while on the top; and why the women's choir is brought here, and not to the station below. Arrived there, the worshippers form in order before the sacred enclosure; 11 is the rubric; more exactly it should be translated "The Lord giveth a word; the women bringing tidings of a great host"; they sing a theme about God, illustrated by the story of the great host of the God of Sabaoth. Then (12-14) come verses out of which no skill of translators has ever made connected poetry, and for a good reason: the passage announces the set of five anthems that the women's choir is to sing, naming each anthem by its opening words only. (It is as if we took the first lines of five favourite hymns and pronounced them in a sequence.) (1) "Kings

of hosts they flee, they flee, and a housewife divideth the spoil"; a song of victory, with obvious allusion to Deborah. (2) "If ye dwell among the dung-heaps"; this sounds like the opening of a scornful song about the slackers, such as we find in Judg. v. 16-17. (3) "Dove's wings covered with silver, her pinions with glittering gold"; this sounds like a song of the richness of the spoil, parallel to Judg. v. 30. (4) "When the Almighty scattered kings therein"; again a song of victory. It would be strange if, at a service on this spot, there were no allusion to the victories of Joshua; this may have supplied it. (5) "It snoweth in Zalmon." What note did this anthem strike? Snow in the Bible is used as an illustration of the illimitable power and resources of God (cxlviii.; Job xxxvii. 6, and xxxviii. 22); and this anthem may be in that key. But snow is also used as a symbol of absolute purity (Isa. i. 18; Psalm li. 7). We note that this psalm (lxviii.), unlike lxxxiv. and others, has no special passage to accompany the ritual act of purification (Chapter IX.), though li. was available, and was a psalm of Gerizim. May it not be that the snow-anthem was the song sung during that ritual act?

The thought moves on; it has been concerned with the triumphal progress of God's people; now it becomes the triumphal progress of God Himself. The theme is explained in 17*b*: "The Lord is come from Sinai to His shrine"—that is, on Gerizim. God came from Sinai to Bashan with His people; let there be no envy, He came on further to Gerizim (15-17). He has gone further still, with completed work: "Thou hast gone

up on high, led captives captive, taken tribute of men, even them that rebel, that God might dwell therein" (18). There is no cry of humble access; we pass straight to the second sacrifice (Selah) and praise-cry (19), corresponding to 7 at the first sacrifice. About this also let there be an ode (20-23). This ode is marred for Christians by the savageness of its imagery; but the moral is plain; God's victory is complete; He is one who can save and does save; His enemies are defeated to the last detail, and Israel is established in its territory to the last inch, from Bashan to the Mediterranean.

Third Part of the Service: Verses 24 to End.—The worshippers now move on into the sanctuary for the final service and sacrifice. There is a happy expression of their joy in their procession (24-25): "It is good for us to be here, going into God's sanctuary with Him; minstrels, singers, people from North and South as well as those of Shechem." The different sections have their separate welcome (as in cvii., Chapter XVII., p. 237); those from "the well of Jacob," the local congregation (26; the P.Bk. delightfully mistranslates "Thank Him, ye from the well of Jacob" by "Thank Him from the ground of the heart"); those from the South: "There is little Benjamin bringing them down, the princes of Judah their leaders" (27*a*); and those from the North (27*b*).

They come to the great altar, and the summons-cry goes up to God (28; 29*a* is an insertion for the later use at Jerusalem). They are in the open, looking forth towards God in heaven, and Israel in His land;

the thought comes of the peoples beyond. It cannot be said that the next verses are affectionate towards those other races; to invent insulting nicknames is hardly a mark of liking; and God is asked to keep His eye upon them! "Rebuke the beast of the reeds (that hippopotamus Egypt), the assemblage of bulls, with kine of the peoples (Assyria with its winged bulls, and the nations that are its hangers-on), trampling down them that delight in silver (this may mean those that loot and impose tribute, or the money-grubbing Phœnicians); scatter the nations that delight in war" (30). Still, a bigger thought prevails; such a God as our God must win the worship of all the world; so Egypt and the rest must some day come to pay Him honour (31-32). Then comes the final sacrifice, and a glowing praise-song to the King of earth and heaven (33-35). It would probably be followed by a feast.

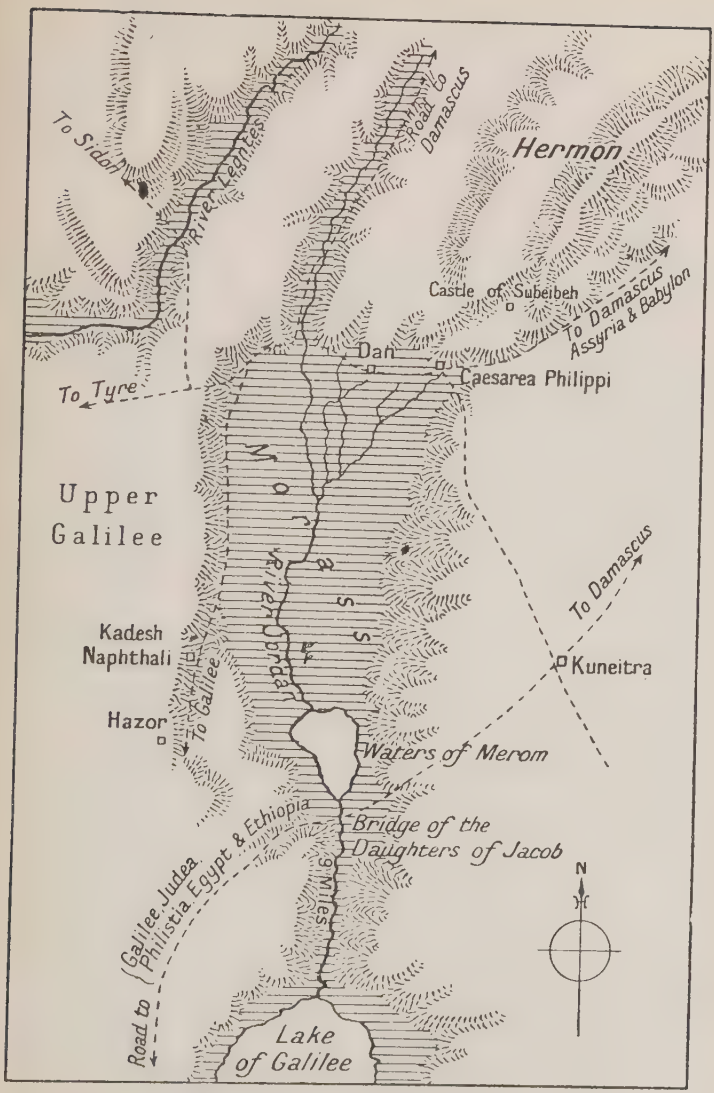
The Thought of this Psalm completed by Jesus.—We have seen what they said and did; let us see what they were trying to say. They had reached a lofty stage of truth and thought; but they were to go higher yet; there are implications of their truth that they had not yet realised, as in their attitude to other peoples of the world. They were reaching forward; they were trying to say something bigger than at that point they could. In Jesus was the "pleroma" of all such efforts. It is fitting that He should have sat at the very Well of Jacob, at the foot of Gerizim, when He gave the final completion to the aspirations of its worshippers. The idea they had of a God who did

not remain on high, but Himself came down to work out His plan for men, by a chosen company, and who ascended up after making His final triumph sure, finds its obvious application to the life of Jesus, and verse 13 is quotable of His Ascension.

In His teaching to the woman at the well Jesus faces a tendency that was likely to result, and did result, from the value the Hebrew rightly placed on sacred localities. They tried on Gerizim to realise religion as spiritual, to think of it in terms of mankind and of a God approachable by all mankind. Yet when a woman, whose belief was a product of that religion, met One whom she felt to be a prophet, her mind has no spiritual question to ask Him. She felt that this must be a great authoritative teacher; she would naturally seize the opportunity to ask Him about the things that mattered above all others; and the eager question that leaps to her lips is concerned with the merits of rival sanctuaries! The feeling of which traces are shown in lxviii. 16 had grown into the terrible bitterness of the quarrel between Jew and Samaritan, and as the Christian world knows only too sadly, in such a case the religious eagerness of the times is usurped by controversy instead of growth in spiritual knowledge. So the Jewish race, losing its national independence, tended to stand on guard against the peoples of the world, to insist especially on all points that marked the Jew off from the Gentile, and to concentrate religious loyalty on the keeping of the distinctively Jewish points of the Law.

This was a falling back from what those who first

sang Psalm lxviii. had attained; it was going to hinder them from reaching what they had been well on the way to attaining, what they were trying to say. They could emphasise the spirituality of God (He is here; He is the God of our sanctuary; yet He is God in heaven, and the final emphasis is on that), and the universality of God (He is the special God of Israel; yet He is God of all the world of men; that is the dominant truth). But the Finisher of our Faith adds, The moment you overpress any local idea in religion you go wrong, get things out of proportion. God is your own God, as if there were no other people; but if you deduce that He is less their God than yours, you go wrong. The Temple is God's house, but true worship must be for all mankind; therefore the spirit and essence of it must be that which can be offered anywhere; the moment you emphasise anything that would anchor it to one place, make the people of one place more privileged than another, you distort it. If you see in your religion something that fits it more for one people than another, then that something is false. If everyone cannot have a thing, then that thing is not essential; but all the good things you know, go and tell to others, that all mankind may have the chance to know them. God is God of all mankind, and it follows that religion cannot be anything but catholic, universal, capable of the fullest practice by all the races of mankind.



For notes to plan, see page 196.

PLAN

To illustrate the situation of Dan.

On the rim of a saucer of plain, that receives drainage from a large mountain area, and also has great springs at Dan and at Cæsarea Philippi (Banias); each of which begins a branch of the Jordan. Dan is lifted 500 feet above the level of Lake Huleh ("Waters of Merom"). Rob Roy's adventures occurred in trying to follow the Jordan from Dan to Lake Huleh. He speaks of impenetrable beds of papyrus reed; and of horses and men sinking clean out of sight in mud.

The importance of this district vis-à-vis the East is shown by the series of castles built or rebuilt by the Crusaders for its defence. Kitchener examined and surveyed their splendid remains. They include work by Babylonian, Phœnician, Roman, Crusader, and Saracen, who held them in turn.

The mound of Dan, the "little hill Mizar," is half a mile in diameter, 60 feet high. In the heart of it is the great spring, and a splendid oak which is still "holy," and constantly hung with votive offerings.

It will be seen that roads passing Dan lead to all parts of the world known to Israel.

For accounts of Dan, see Stanley, "Sinai and Palestine," Thompson, "The Land and the Book," "The Rob Roy on the Jordan," and "Picturesque Palestine," edited by Sir Charles Wilson.

CHAPTER XV

THE TEMPLE AT DAN

Psalter of the Sons of Korah. Xlii.-xlix. and lxxxiv.-lxxxix. Variety, and devotional and poetical supremacy. Procedure of worship at Dan; prevailing vision. Questionings and perplexities of these psalms illustrated by the setting of Dan; a shrine before a holy mountain, Hermon; amidst suggestive scenery, springs, water, quaking morasses; only safety to be found on rock-foundation; by the side of a world-road; its worshippers not residents but pilgrims. Search for faith in a God who controls all mankind. Thought completed by Jesus at Cæsarea Philippi; His Church founded on rock.

THIS collection is headed "Of the Sons of Korah," and includes xlii.-xlix., lxxxiv.-lxxxix. In it there are services for great pilgrim festivals (xlii.-xliii.), a plea in times of danger (xliv.), a marriage liturgy (xlv.; would this be used for Jezebel's wedding?), a morning sacrifice (xlvi.), and a psalm that faces the riddle of life (xlix.) in the tone of Job; a thanksgiving in prosperity (lxxxv.), a psalm showing a most interesting outlook upon other races in a vision of a day of judgment (lxxxvii.; see Chapter V.), and a doxology (lxxxix., 51*b*). Lxxxviii. is of special interest to show our gain by full understanding (Chapter II.); it joins two incomplete "prayers of humble access"; if we were to take it as it stands as a complete service in itself, it would be as if xxii. ended at verse 21, omitting the final assurance to which the worshipper went forward.

The devotional value of this collection is supreme. It achieves poetical finish, and beauty of phrase to fit profundity of thought and conviction. Greatly loved phrases are xlii. 1: "Like as the hart desireth the water-brooks, so longeth my soul after Thee"; xliii. 3: "Send out Thy light and Thy truth, let them lead me"; xlv. 7: "God hath anointed thee with the oil of gladness"; and the refrain of xlii. 11, xliii. 5: "Why so heavy, O my soul?" Also these psalms link up with a visit of Jesus to the home of their origin, and with His Transfiguration; He completes the thought they were trying to reach, the answers that their faith was bravely trying to achieve.

Procedure of Worship at Dan.—There was no such wonderful procession-route at Dan as at Shechem and Jerusalem, but there was the vision of God upon the great white throne of Hermon, and the psalms themselves fully illustrate the procedure of worship. There is the *opening ode*, giving the keynote of the day's service; as in xlii. 1-3, "As longs the hind for water-brooks, so longs my soul for Thee," the longing that has brought us here, the vital question that presses us sorely—people will not believe in God; and they quote real facts against my belief; am I right after all? Then comes the *procession*; as in lxviii. 24-25, the worshippers describe their own procession as a help to their joy in it. They have a *marching-song* (5). *Prostration* is indicated in 6, "my soul is cast down"; the *purification cry* in 7. They come to the shrine, by the little hill Mizar, Tel el Kadi, interesting descriptions of which are given by Stanley, and in Thompson's

"The Land and the Book"; they are very conscious of Hermon, to which they are looking. The torrent roars like thunder; the Jews believed in a "great sea" under the earth, the "great deeps," "deep of the dragon," as shown in the origin of the Flood, when the great deeps were broken up; here by subterranean channels it comes forth, calling to the other "great deep" above the firmament, behind the windows of heaven; "deep calleth unto deep to the thunder of Thy watercourses" (7). They pass now to the rock of the hill—firm footing; it is a symbol that their belief in God too has been firm-founded, unshakable. Without doubting Him, here they may ask Him about their perplexities: "Lord, we are Thy people, yet we are ruined; our foes have prevailed; listen to the enemies' taunt-song (like that of Rabshakeh): 'Where is thy God?'" (9-10). Here in Thy presence we are able to give our confident reply (10). Xliii. is a continuation of the same service: "Give us an outward tangible sign of Thy strength and favour; crush our enemies." This serves as a humble access, pleading, be it noted, weakness and misery, not confessing sin, an approach for help rather than forgiveness. Then at the altar comes the *sacrifice-cry* (3-4), followed by praise to the music of harps (4*b*), and the refrain again (as in lxxxiv.). There is the same use of a refrain in xlvi. 7 and 11. Xlvii. shows that while marching they clap their hands in rhythm (1): "All ye peoples, clap your hands"; as the sacrifice is offered with a shout, there is a peal of trumpets (5), and a cry of assurance that God has accepted the sacrifice; and

again a refrain, to be chanted over and over, "God is king of all the earth, chant ye, chant ye" (6-7), which is elaborated into a short ode (8-9). Lxxxvii. 6 has a rubrical direction after the sacrifice: "Singers and trumpeters together (sing the anthem), All my fresh springs are in Thee." Lxxxix. 46 has short humble access cries introduced by "How long?" (Chapter X., p. 137); and, as shown above, lxxxviii. contains two separate prayers of humble access. The sacrifice-summons to God is shown in lxxxv. 4-7 and lxxxvi. 16-17, and a most stirring example is xliv. 23-26, connecting itself as in Ecclus. l. with a prostration at the moment of sacrifice; we men lie here as if dead or sleeping, and think of God by contrast as awake, as arising to help and save: "Because of Thee we are slain all the day; awake, why sleepest Thou, Lord? arouse Thee, nor spurn us for ever. Why hidest Thou Thy face?" Lxxxv. 8 proclaims God's acceptance of the sacrifice: "Let me hear what the Lord saith, for He speaketh peace to His people." The praise-cries in many cases link up the thoughts of the worshippers with the opening ode, or with some great truth that has been brought out during the service; xlviii. 9-14 is an addition for use at Jerusalem, and one can imagine it being used as a recessional round the restored walls when Nehemiah and his helpers rejoiced to encircle them: "Encircle Zion, make the round of her, count her towers." Lxxxv. ends with a very beautiful prophecy of the golden age such as Isaiah loved to picture. We see the structure on which the psalmist built his songs of praise after sacrifice; it

might be a confident invocation of God because of His past mercies or His glories in nature; or a confident assertion of the granted boon, with an elaboration of its blessedness. Sometimes it took the keynote that opened the service and dwelt on that, sometimes a refrain. It might include a cry of praise about God, a cry of blessing on the worshippers, and (sometimes very savagely) a curse-cry on the national enemies; these last we may surely omit in our use, or correct them in our thoughts by the Christian doxology that we add when using the psalms. Finally, the collection ends with a doxology (lxxxix. 51).

The Vision before the Worshippers at Dan.—To understand the background of the thinking of these psalms, it is especially important to know the home of their origin; their thoughts were intimately affected by the local surroundings. The questions they treated were thought out (*a*) at the foot of a holy mountain, Hermon; (*b*) in the midst of very suggestive scenery —and scenery to the Hebrew was never merely picturesque but full of meaning from God; and (*c*) at the side of a great international road, along which passed the armies, the caravans, the diplomats and spies, the raiding parties, the news and life of great peoples like the Assyrians, the Egyptians, the Phœnicians and Romans. The district of Dan has been compared to Peshawar, by the Khyber Pass, leading from India to Central Asia; of the type of life in such a place Kipling's "Kim" gives a vivid idea. No man living at Dan could know only about his own local affairs. He lived in a buzz of interests and news

in which the happenings at the life-centres of the non-Jewish world were as real as what happened in the place where he lived. Moreover, (*d*) many, perhaps most, of those who used the shrine were not residents but pilgrims, who carried into their service what had been stirred in them as they came through places of historic suggestiveness on their journey thither.

Living in such an atmosphere, the people had to ask themselves what kind of God they believed in. Surely He could not be a God who cared only for Israel and Israel's affairs; He must be a God who understood, cared for, handled and managed the developments of all nations; these could not be separated off from Israel's fortunes, Israel's destinies, or the sphere of Israel's God. Some thought that passed through the mind of a soldier or statesman in far-off Memphis or Nineveh might result in Israelites marching as a gang of chained prisoners across the desert. If it was to be any comfort to believe in God, He must be a God who knew all about this; who in His mighty plans has an outlook over all mankind, has purposes that include all nations, and the power to make those purposes prevail. But we cannot believe in such a God merely because we would wish Him to be such. The other nations do not believe in Him; they ask sarcastic questions when Israel proclaims their God to be such. Moreover, there are facts to be faced that tell against such a belief; look at the world as it is, with the true believers oppressed, with force triumphant, with the bloodthirsty, massacring Assyrians and the cheating, money-grubbing Phœnicians so successful.

Is it really true that there is a God with a purpose for all mankind? And can He really bring His purposes to pass, or has He lost control? Is it actually true that the real way to get power in the world is by loving, not hating? (the Assyrians laugh at the notion!); by sacrificing, not by getting? (the Sidonians jeer at the very idea!); by worshipping God truly and living nobly and justly, and keeping yourself unspotted from the world? Is this actually true of the actual world, or only a beautiful dream of a fancy world? We *must* win to clearness about this. If only we could be absolutely certain of the answer, then indeed they would be exultant gatherings for worship that we would hold at our shrine in Dan by the great world-road.

Such were the questions they wrestled with in these psalms. Such were the questions that Jesus came to this very locality to think out finally, at Cæsarea Philippi, before the climax of His assault to "overcome the world" by the Cross. Such, too, are the very questions that nations have to think out today. If, then, the study of these psalms is helped by reading them in their home surroundings, it is very worth while.

The Situation of the Temple at Dan.—(*a*) It is an altar before a holy mountain, a throne of God.

The land God chose to be the Holy Land, to set His name there, consists of two great slopes, divided by a trench east to west between them. From the south it slopes down from Hebron by Jerusalem and Samaria to the valley of Esdraelon, from 3,000 feet

to sea-level in about eighty miles. The northern slope is steeper and in a shorter distance; it starts from Lebanon and Hermon, about 10,000 feet, and drops in three terraces to Esdraelon. There is no dominating mountain in the south; Neby Samwil, Tel Azur, Gibeah, Ebal, and Gerizim do not tower high from lowlands, but are rounded hills among hills almost as high; Olivet is a short "hog's back." But in the north rises the majestic peak of Hermon, towering with snow-clad head over all Galilee, catching the eye in every view. The Arabs today call it "king-mountain." But to the Hebrew of olden time it was much more than a splendid mountain with a white head. A great mountain spoke to them of God. Sinai gave to Moses and his people an authentic certainty of being in the very presence of God. Elijah and Paul, when a tremendous convulsion had shaken the soul to its base, and put upon them the overpowering compulsion to rethink their convictions about life, go to the mountain of God; there they would hear His voice, and win the clear guidance without which life had become impossible. In the Holy Land all the places where men felt most sure to find God were "high places"; the popular impulse was to increase them, "to worship on every high hill." Today in Palestine the "welys," direct successors of the "high places," are a feature in the view. When they were building the Temple at Jerusalem they took enormous trouble not to lose any of the height of Moriah. It had not a wide enough natural platform at the top for their gathering, but rather than cut it down to broaden it,

they built a platform round it on great substructures. It must be the holy *mountain.*

Hermon never became to the Hebrews as holy as Sinai or Zion. But it had a mysterious and impressive holiness to them. Read xlviii. 1-3, omitting the words that later adapted it for use at Jerusalem: "Great is the Lord, in the city of our God, the mountain of His holiness, beautiful in elevation, joy of the whole land, recesses of the north, city of a great king; God in her fortresses, known for a refuge." The "night-mist of Hermon, that descendeth on the mountain of Zion" (cxxxiii. 3) is literally the saving of Palestine during the long summer, and is the most beautiful simile of the gentle but effective mercy of God (Isa. xviii. 4, and constantly). We have already seen what would be the feelings of the pilgrim caravans when they caught sight of Hermon (cxxi. 1, Chapter VI.).

At the foot of Hermon stood the shrine of Dan. Everyone who came there would feel that he came to Hermon; he came before God, looking up at a mountain of God. There is no great city at Dan, no such associations with old sacred story as at Bethel, Gerizim, and Jerusalem; at Hermon, as at Sinai, the main reason for being there was the mountain, and the voice of God from it; as when Moses "builded an altar under the hill, and offered unto the Lord, and God spoke, and Moses told the messages in the audience of the people; and they said, All that the Lord hath said we will do and be obedient" (Exod. xxiv. 7). Hermon was the one place in Palestine where they would experience the natural phenomena that were

in the story of Sinai; the rollings of storm, the clouds and mystery, thunders and lightnings, which were the accompaniments of the presence, signs of the power, and medium of the speech of God. It was in this setting that Israel at Dan asked themselves questions and gave themselves answers. They *saw* the God of the mountain; as in Exod. xxiv. 10, "they saw the God of Israel; and there was under His feet as it were a paved work of sapphire stone, and as it were the very heaven for clearness." So in these psalms we find their answers all centre on the certainty of the majestic power of God. What can human power matter compared with His? What quality in man can prevail compared with the obedience that has God on its side?

(*b*) It is a shrine in the midst of very suggestive scenery.

Dan is not only at the foot of a mountain, it is set in a trough which is liable to earthquakes, and which is more full of water-springs than any part of Palestine. A large mountain area here drains into a small basin. By the very side of the shrine at Dan a spring burst forth, practically a river at once: "Jordan springs forth full-grown." There are other springs; the valley becomes so thick with reeds and morass that the course of the river and the edge of Lake Merom cannot be distinguished; read the account in "A Canoe on the Jordan," by Rob Roy Macgregor.

So these psalms are full of similes from water, such as would never occur to a writer in dry, stony Jerusalem, with its one intermittent spring and cisterns.

When Ezekiel wanted to use a simile of a river at Jerusalem, it had to be a miraculous river, symbolising a heavenly revolution, a new Jerusalem (xlvii.). And to the Jews living water, a spring, was more than merely water; it was a direct favour of God, a blessing such as we in a wet country can hardly appreciate. Many of the springs are still "holy" to the people of Palestine. An interesting account of these is given in the *Journal of the Palestine Oriental Society* (September, 1921). We recall the joy of the woman of Sychar at the prospect of "living water"; Jacob's Well, where she drew, was not a spring but a deep cistern for soakage water.

We have already referred to Jewish beliefs about the waters, as reflected in the story of Creation and the Flood. There were waters above the sky (Gen. i. 6), and a sea of waters beneath the earth, in vast gloomy caverns which associate themselves naturally with the thought of death, and become "darkness" and "the grave." If this underground sea bursts forth, it can be destruction, like the Flood; but if God controls it and brings it forth by a spring, it can be a blessing, a river "that makes glad a city of God" (xlvi. 4). There is an earth-crust above this sea, and on that crust things totter and shake, as its waves roar; there are earthquakes, bogs, and morasses. It actually is so around Dan; they could easily hold this belief. Peters says: "About Dan everything seems to be in unstable equilibrium, as though resting on great seas, whose waters roar and foam beneath. On my first visit we floundered for what seemed like miles through

water up to the horses' bellies, but on what were evidently roads or horse-tracks beneath, hearing always the roar of the waters pouring out at Dan. This region has been subject to earthquakes, associating with the idea of earth resting on subterranean seas whose agitation makes the earth quiver, the mountains totter." (On the underground waters of Palestine, see Fulleylove and Kelman, p. 56.)

So the only safety was to get on rock, especially a rock mountain whose roots were deep in the underground sea itself. Anything that was merely on the surface was doomed; this applied to buildings—it applied also to faith. In the midst of such scenery, think of a people living whose faith tottered under blows of national disaster; to whom it was a common sight to see their dead strewn unburied in the track of hostile raiding parties. Their surroundings will give them natural similes for their agonised thinkings, and for their exultant convictions if they win through to them. This is what we find in these psalms. Look through them, and see how many illustrations are taken from water, from the underground caverns of the sea and of sheol, from the safety of the rock foundation. Xlii. 1-2, xliii. 6, xlviii. 1-3 have been quoted above, also lxxxviii. 7. "God is our refuge, therefore we fear not though earth quiver and mountains totter in the midst of the seas. Its waters roar and foam; mountains quake at its swelling" (xlvi. 1): "The enemy have surrounded me like water daily, have encircled me altogether" (lxxxviii. 17). "Thou hast crushed us in the place of the dragon [the mythological monster

that lurked in the deep beneath the earth; see G. A. Smith, "Jerusalem," i., chapter iv.]; and covered us with deep shadow" (xliv. 20). But the brutal heathen "like sheep are folded to hell; death feedeth them [as sheep are often folded and fed in a cavern]; the righteous trample them daily, and their form hell's temple consumeth. But God redeemeth me from hell. He leadeth me [just as a guide could keep men on the firm path in the morass, keep them from slipping down to sheol]. The enemy reacheth the lot of his fathers, that see not light for ever" (xlix. 14). Lxxxviii. 3-6 and 10 is a pathetic picture of sufferings from a raid: "My life have they struck down to hell. I am counted as those gone down to the pit. Among the dead am I, like the slain that lie in the grave, whom Thou rememberest no more and they are cut off from Thee [they have not even had the burial that commends their souls to God]. Thou hast laid me in the nether pit, in darkness in the gulf. Doest Thou wonders for the dead, or shall the shades arise and praise Thee?"

(*c*) The shrine stood by the side of a great world-road.

We have seen how this forced Israel to think in terms of world-outlook. Hardly a psalm of this collection is without some reference to other peoples; they are called "the heathen," "the godless," "the enemy," "people and dwellers of the world," "the proud," "congregation of the violent," "the haters of God." Israel is "Thy people," or "the poor," "the needy," which means the suppliant nation, not the needy

people in it. The enemy put taunt-questions to God's people (xlii. 3-10); and Israel must put the question to itself fully and squarely (xlix. 5). The enemy vaunt their own solution of life-problems, and there are facts on their side; we are downtrodden, they are strong; they believe in "deceit and violence" (xliii. 1); in "frightfulness" (xliv. 11-22); in money (xlix. 6); in wrong and robbery. But it will be shown that they are wrong; God will cast them out of our land (xliv. 2, xlvi. 6, lxxxix. 10, xlviii. 4-6); He will stop their warrings (xlvi. 8); He will take away their lands, give them to Israel, and put all peoples under their feet (xlvii. 3, xlix. 10-11). In lxxxix. 23-25 God makes promises for the Deliverer who shall arise: "I will crush His foes before him; I will put his hand on the Sea, and on the Rivers his right hand." Note that in that attitude, with his right hand on Mesopotamia and his left on the Mediterranean, the Deliverer will be looking towards Hermon. But, as we have seen (Chapter V.), the higher ambition also came to these people of Dan, that God would yet gather all nations in with Israel to be His peoples: "nations that Thou hast made shall come and bow before Thee, Lord, and magnify Thy name" (lxxxvi. 8-9, xlvii. 8-9, lxxxvii.).

Israel's Conviction.—After facing and stating all the facts, what is Israel's final answer about these world-problems, as shown in these psalms?

It is not human might that gives power: it is God; He has not lost grip on His world; He settles the destinies of Israel and of all peoples. The most practical

plan for men is to serve Him. We could find no clearer statement of this great faith than xliv. 2-8, xlvii. 3-4, xlix. 16-20. An interesting index to the keynotes of these psalms can be got by taking the questions asked, and the answers given in the refrains. "Why fear in days of evil? Why so cast down, O my soul?" The refrains, a special feature of these psalms, are in xlii. 11, xliii. 5, xlvi. 3, 7, 11, xlix. 12, 20; and the sum of all in xlvii. 7: "God is the King of all the earth; chant ye, chant ye."

(*d*) This shrine was chiefly used by pilgrims.

It was through this pilgrim journey to Dan and its associations that our Lord passed on His way from Capernaum to Cæsarea Philippi. There was Hazor, scene of Joshua's battle, the Beth-horon of the north (Josh. xi.). Below this was the scene of Abraham's rescue of Lot (Gen. xiv.). Kadesh-Naphthali was the home and rallying-place of Barak against Sisera (Judg. iv.), and was a "city of refuge" (Num. xxxv.). The story of the beginnings of Israelite Dan is stirring if not edifying (Judg. xvii.-xviii.). It is a curious parallel between Hermon and Sinai, that the first shrine set up at Hermon by the Danites contained an image, and that later Jeroboam set up there the calf symbol of God exactly as Aaron had done. In our Lord's time the journey would give signs of the great power of Rome, in roads and bridges, some still existing, and in the mighty castles of Hunin and Subeibeh, and the splendid resort of Banias (Cæsarea Philippi).

THE THOUGHT OF THESE PSALMS COMPLETED BY

Jesus.—The pilgrim standing at Dan today can summon up a great parade of the world's most ambitious men who have passed there or thereby; Egyptian and Assyrian, Roman and Jew, Saracen and Crusader; Alexander the Great and Timour the Tartar came close by, and Napoleon's guns could be heard here. They were dreaming vast dreams. But there came one visitor here whose ambition made theirs seem puny. Jesus was determined to master the whole world for all time. He was incomparably more ambitious than any Assyrian (who only wanted to raid and crush the world), or any Phœnician (who wanted the world's wealth), or any Roman who came here (as Pompeius and Vespasian and Titus did; the Roman only wanted to organise the world). These all admitted limits to their ambition; geographically, even the Roman did not want to touch India or the Far East, though it was known to him; and even the Roman only demanded conformity and obedience. As for men's inward life, let them do as they pleased. But Jesus had ambitions far beyond that; He would not keep His hands off any of the human race; He would not leave out of His sway even men's most secret thoughts. He wanted all of a man, all men; an utter and transforming allegiance. And He was intensely practical. He did not intend merely to proclaim winning truths and let them win their way. He was going to make certain once for all that His victory should be complete. He must have an entire triumph over Satan; He must leave a record that would be an intelligible appeal to all men everywhere; and

He must create an organisation, an organised body of messengers penetrated by His own spirit and outlook, to go everywhere, world-wide, to apply His victory, tell His message, and gather in His fruits. Therefore He must have two certainties, absolute and rock-founded: first, that His way of aiming at world-power was the right way, the only way; secondly, that His organisation for following up His victory was sure to do so; it would be the saddest of tragedies if His followers merely settled down to get their own advantage from His Good News and let other races take their chance. There must come a point in His working when Jesus felt these certainties to be achieved, when He could say, surely with joy: "On this rock I found My whole campaign." It was here, at Cæsarea Philippi, that He exultantly said that very thing.

Jesus must have thought out, before His ministry began, the fundamental practical question: "How does a man get the greatest power over his fellow-men?" There are plenty of ways of getting partial power—some power over some men for a time. Is there any way by which a man can get complete power over all men everywhere for all time? His boyhood's surroundings at Nazareth would bring to His notice all the ways by which men usually feel they ensure power; there is no view in the world more provocative, for one thinking out this vital question, than that from the hill above Nazareth. Jesus had made His decision; He rejected all the worldly means illustrated by those who travelled on those neigh-

bouring high-roads; He would rely absolutely on trust in God and utter love for His fellow-men. He had now been trying His plan for three years, and what was the result? Surely His experience must make Him review the whole problem again; the multitudes had fallen away from him, the Jews sought to kill Him, even His faithful disciples seemed shaken. He was going forward to the final act, to die on the Cross. Was He absolutely right after all? Would it win the victory He aimed at, or be merely one more heroic tragedy based on a deluded idealism?

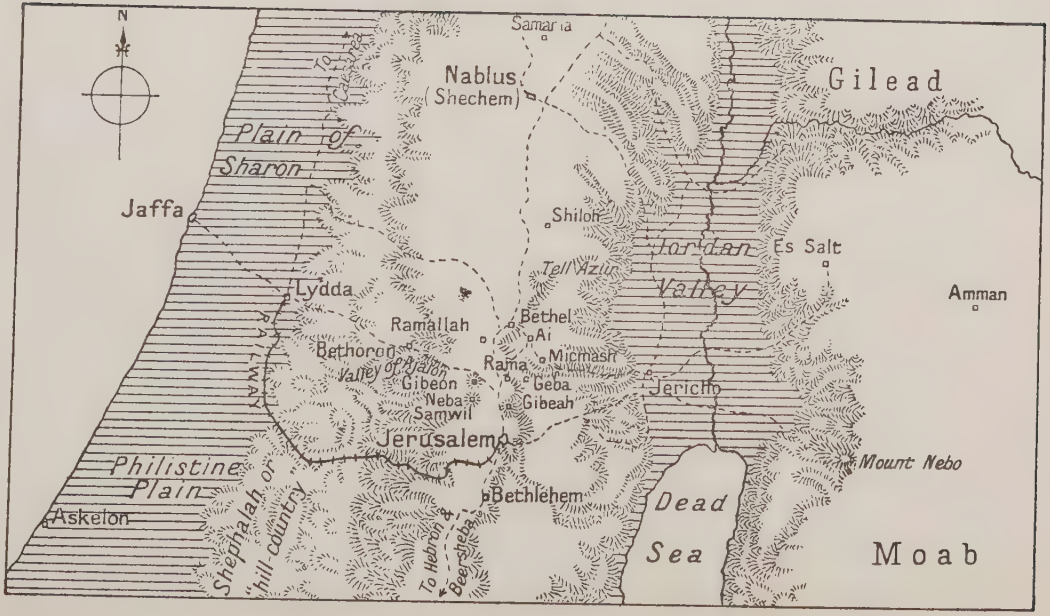
He came here for a week's retirement. Here He had concentrated before His eyes outward symbols of all the means by which practical men have won empire over other men's bodies and minds, just as the psalmists had. Here were invincible fortresses, the Roman worship of Cæsar, and the Greek worship of Pan. All down the ages men have so obstinately believed in force; even His own followers find it hard to win free from the belief; but He deliberately rejected it; and it is Napoleon, the greatest example of the use of that means which Jesus rejected, who gives the verdict: "The power that I have gained is simply nothing compared to that which was won by Jesus." The Greek spirit represented by Pan-worship at Banias achieved marvels—to build life on the utmost use of the intellect and of human powers, on the fullest understanding of life's facts, human and natural. But it could not and cannot bring men to their complete best, because, after all, man is not *of* this world, he is only *in* this world. The Greek spirit was the

elimination of "faith"; to the Greek faith concerned "the things that are not" (1 Cor. i. 28). Jesus, here close by the statues of Pan, rejects that outlook. It said, "Seek ye first the things of this world; seek them rightly and nobly." He said the things of this world are incidental; seek ye the spiritual. Finally, there was at Cæsarea Philippi a temple of Cæsar-worship. We are liable to be unfair in judgment of the Roman Empire; we know that it persecuted the Church and produced Nero. But it stood for the most wonderful experiment men had ever combined to make for the good of a whole group of races; to do away with wars among civilised people, merely guarding frontiers from barbarians; to supply all the best results of civilisation to all civilised men—literature, education, travel, trade, law and justice and mutual understanding. It was the greatest League of Nations that ever existed; its aim was to organise civilised mankind so that all should get the greatest mutual benefit. The symbol of its unity of organisation was the deification of the Emperor. It did wonderful things; our civilisation is still largely built on what the Roman Empire did for men, our language, laws, and literature; our Church was modelled on Roman lines; our orderly liturgies largely came out of Roman brains. But Jesus rejected its plan. It failed, as it always must fail, when men found lives primarily on human organisation. It is not simply that mistakes are made; it puts a supplementary thing in the place of a fundamental. It leaves out the root of the matter—absolute trust in God and utter love of man for man.

So at Cæsarea Philippi we may reverently imagine Jesus thinking over again and accepting again the plan He had made at Nazareth and practised in His ministry. It was a mental Gethsemane. He was facing the same set of questions as the psalmists of Dan; there is no better way of entering into those psalms than to imagine them being used by Jesus on His visit to the home of their origin. Thus He "fulfilled" their words, as later, on the Cross itself, He filled with all possible meaning two other psalms which He quoted. "Let me say unto God my rock, Why hast Thou forgotten me? Why go I mourning for the violence of the enemy? (xlii. 9). Lover and friend and mine acquaintance hast Thou put far from me, and made me an offence to them (lxxxviii. 8, 18). The proud have risen against me, the violent have sought my life (lxxxvi. 14). There are that trust in wealth (in glory, in fighting-power, in their own gods); and man with wealth without understanding is like the beasts that perish (xlix. 6, 12)." Jesus came to the serene certainty of trust towards which the psalmists could only reach out, though with heroic faith; He gave fully the answers they were trying to give. "God is King over the nations; to God belong the rulers of the earth (xlvii. 8-9). All nations that Thou hast made shall magnify Thy name. Thou art God alone (lxxxvi. 9). Thou lovest righteousness and hatest iniquity; therefore God, even Thy God, hath anointed thee with the oil of gladness above thy fellows (xlv. 6)."

So Jesus could go on to the holy mountain for His

Transfiguration; could speak with Moses and Elijah of the plan that is not to be varied; of His decease that He is to accomplish at Jerusalem (Luke ix.). His plan is invincibly founded on the rock; it is unshakably certain of victory; God and the company of heaven know it well; prophecy, Law, and psalmody find at last what all had been reaching out to understand.


N
To Haifa
Samaria
Nablus
(Shechem)
Gilead
Plain of
Sharon
Jaffa
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Jordan
Valley
Es Salt
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Lydda
Amman
Bethel
Ramallah
Ai
Bethoron
Valley of Ajalon
Rama
Micmash
Gibeon
Geba
Jericho
Neba
Samwil
Gibeah
Jerusalem
Philistine
Plain
Mount Nebo
Bethlehem
Dead
Sea
Askelon
Moab
Shephalah or
hill country
To Hebron &
Beersheba

PLAN

To illustrate the situation of Bethel.

Bethel stands half-way between Hebron and Samaria on a narrow, lumpy plateau. Steep sides fall away east and west; T. Drake, surveying near Bethoron, says "three and a half miles in direct line took three and a half hours' riding." The historic roads naturally follow the wadys that cut deep into these sides; especially two wadys from opposite sides that nearly meet at the top; Wady Kelt from Jericho, with its head near Bethel, and the pass from Bethoron by Gibeon. The road north to south now misses Bethel; but in the time of Abraham Bethel was a natural stopping-place for the traveller on this route.

The Bethel psalms that survive reflect the feelings of people there during the three years' siege of Samaria, waiting for news of its fall, dreading to see the Assyrian coming down the road. Read of their terror in Isaiah x., and imagine them using these liturgies. Their appeal is to the God of history suggested by sites in view, connected with Abraham, Jacob, Joshua, Deborah, Jonathan, Elijah. The view of Abraham and Lot, over the Jordan Valley then rich with "cities of the plain," and over the hills of Palestine so assuredly promised to Abraham's seed, was from a hill above Bethel. Bethel seems never to have been a centre of quiet, peaceable life; always stress, heroism, terror, and searchings of heart.

CHAPTER XVI

THE TEMPLE AT BETHEL

Psalms l., lxxiii.-lxxxiii. Less variety than the other psalters. "The Psalms of Conscience"; "God has not failed us—we have failed Him." God is not content with mere worship; He searches the worshipper's heart and life. Procedure of worship at Bethel. Surroundings at Bethel; natural features—vineyards, "the Ladder"; historic scenes and roads; view of Jordan Valley, and of track of Israel under Joshua. Very full of appeal to history. Completion of their thought by Jesus.

THE "Psalms of Asaph" are assigned with great probability to the worship at the Temple at Bethel, a centre of holy associations and worship from earliest times. The collection includes l., lxxiii.-lxxxiii. Its variety is less than other collections: it includes a vintage psalm (lxxv.), a lamentation for the Temple (lxxix.), and a glad service for a major festival (lxxxi.); but the greater number are lamentations over impending or actual national ruin; the questions faced are those raised by such a fate falling on God's Chosen People. "Here we stand, on the spot where God gave His promise to Abraham" (Gen. xiii. 14-17). Yet face the facts: "God, the nations are come into Thy heritage; Thy holy Temple have they defiled: our blood have they shed like water" (lxxix. 1; *cf.* lxxiv. 3-8). What has gone wrong? Is there no God after all? But Jacob stood here in His

very presence: this is Beth-el, House of God (Gen. xxviii. 16). Has this God less power than we thought? We cannot believe that; we look across to the very hills of the Exodus; we can see the sites of Joshua's victories, by the Jordan, at Ai, at Gibeon. Close by is Mizpeh of Samuel, also the scenes of the exploits of Jonathan. It is not God who has failed us: can it be that we have failed God? Conscience gives the answer. God exists: God has power: but He stands with His hand in His bosom (lxxiv. 11), withdrawn, not stretched out to save us. Why? Look at ourselves, and answer. Have we not relied upon being God's favourites? But He will not have favourites. Have we not reckoned on propitiating Him with an almost mechanical worship—as if we could bribe Him with sacrifices, like Balaam on the hills yonder? But God will not be beguiled or bribed (l. 7-13). Let us search our consciences, and blame ourselves, not God. Have we kept the Law—tried to understand the Law? (l. 16-21). Have we come to our sacrifice with spiritual feelings—the great thing that matters to the God we worship? Have we taught our children? Let us arrange this systematically (lxxviii.).

Here is a new, deep, self-searching, spiritual strain of thought. It is Israel's conscience reproaching Israel instead of Israel's God. It was present at Gerizim (li.), but it hardly appears at Dan. In the Bethel psalms it is the dominant thought. It is the spiritual insight that produced Isaiah and Jeremiah. So if at Dan we get the psalms of God's Providence, at Bethel we find the psalms of Man's

Conscience. At Dan the tone is of Easter, at Bethel of Lent.

Procedure of Worship at Bethel.—There is little indication of this in the Psalms, though the usual liturgical structure shows. Their worship was probably at an open-air shrine. There was a sacred oak at Bethel, under which Deborah judged (Judges iv. 5). Exact sites are unknown today; it was probably lower down the hill, at modern Bethel, and the Temple higher up. It was a Jewish tradition that the priests at Bethel could look down on the priests in the Temple court at Jerusalem, ten miles away. From the spot where the present ruins of a castle stand, this is almost possible: Olivet is visible, but a hill shuts out Zion; from higher up it would be possible. Only one psalm indicates the use of *music* (lxxxi. 1-3, very happily). There is one indication of the *ritual act of purification* (lxxiii. 13-14), and this connects itself with the whole moral of the collection, the answer they arrived at after agonised thinking: "Surely God is loving unto Israel, to the pure in heart." There is *humble access* to God: it was their great discovery that the mood in which the worshipper comes matters more deeply than his merely coming and sacrificing. Often it is a mere pleading of need and misery: God must help; our misery must be an irresistible plea (lxxiv. 19, lxxx.)—the last struggle against Assyria, brave, but with no suggestion of contrition; lxxxiii., a similar appeal; lxxix., a lamentation for the Temple: only verse 8 hints at guilt. But the deeper note comes in (lxxiii. 21-22); lxxiv. 1-8, how the enemy has battered

us; 9, how we have deteriorated. The last phrase is literally, "Nor have we anyone that knows a 'How long?'" The "How long?" (Chapter X.) was the true and right method of approach for a suppliant to God. We have fallen into brute ignorance, we, God's people. The literal translation of the whole verse is interesting: "Our signs—that is, standards (as in verse 4)—we see not: there is no more a prophet: nor have we any that knows a 'How long?' That is, we have neither a soldier-leader, nor a thought-leader, nor a worship-leader. Israel in health would have all three: the *king* to upraise the national standard, the *prophet* to apply the lessons of the past to the problems of the present, the *priest* to adapt the liturgies to the whole national life. To be bereft of all three is the deepest possible expression of national mishap. Lxxvii. 1-9 is made spiritual by 6, "I commune with my own heart and search out my spirit." *The act of prostration* is indicated in lxxiv. 21 and lxxxii. 8. The *sacrifice-cry* to God to show His presence by accepting the sacrifice and thus pledge Himself to grant the prayer appears in l. 3-6 and lxxx. 1-3. Following this are *praise-cries*, the most significant part of these psalms. They include praise to God, blessings on His worshippers, and ill-wishes for His enemies: sometimes invoked, sometimes declared as already certain. But the chief difference in these psalms is that the blessing on the worshippers is not to be mere restoration of prosperity, rather it is in God making their punishment a discipline, teaching them deeper truths thereby. Some psalms merely ask for restora-

tion of Israel's prosperity (lxxxi.), and some have savage curses on the enemy, but often there are no curses: the emphasis has gone to what God is to do in teaching and spiritualising Israel. So in l. the sacrifice is offered (6). God accepts it and comes; now for the blessing that He will give (7-15). He speaks in person, with teaching about true religion. So in lxxiii. 23-28: the blessing is His nearness, His counsel, not merely His rescuing providence. Moreover, most significant, in place of a curse upon the enemies of Israel, there begins solemn denunciation of the bad people amongst Israel itself. Throughout the Psalms, terms like "the wicked," "the proud," "the haughty," "the unbelievers," "the oppressors of the poor" refer to foreign nations, the enemy. But read the story of the worship at Bethel by Jeroboam (1 Kings xiii. 10): the feature of it is, Israel denouncing Israel's own bad practices. The same feature appears in the Psalter of Bethel.

So, with the same liturgical structure, a change appears in the whole tone of the service at Bethel. Even the vintage-song is not a happy one (lxxv.). In Palestine the vines grow along the ground, not upward in trees or trellises. The shoot that sticks up in the air is doing what it should not do: it is being haughty instead of being useful. It is "lifting up its horn on high." Imagine the state of mind of a people who, as they cut off such shoots of their vines, cried out, "I hew off the horn of an enemy" (lxxv. 10): who as they trod the juice out of their red grapes in the wine-press, imagined themselves squeezing the blood

of foes, and exulted that God would make the enemy drink of disaster till they reeled (lxxv. 8). The whole congregational atmosphere has changed. At Gerizim the people could rejoice in the mighty God; they were threatened but protected. At Dan they had risen higher: they were far from victorious, but God has the world in hand; their liturgy is confident. But at Bethel they are not quite sure: they do not doubt God, but they do not know what He plans for them. This is chiefly from a noble reason, a real ethical advance. They would not feel certain about their future because they could not feel certain about themselves, because conscience was awake; they had lost the feeling that men can entirely satisfy God by prescribed services of worship, or by worshipping no other God. To come to the service happy and contented was to cry peace, peace, when there was no peace. They were feeling after a higher ideal of what God demands from man; they were lying awake at night, not only over their misfortunes, but over their failures. It was a noble refusal to be happy, through which we ought all to pass.

The Situation of Bethel.—Its *natural surroundings* are reflected in the psalms sung there. It is barren and stony. Glad harvest songs, natural in Samaria and Dan, would be out of place here. Illustrations from water-brooks would be exotic, and the psalms which go so high towards heaven, always touch solid earth, the actual earth of their homes. The one richness of this neighbourhood is its grapes; Ramallah grapes are famous today: so there is a vintage-song

(lxxv.) Flocks fed on the hillsides, so there are illustrations from the care a shepherd must take in leading his sheep.

In *historic associations* it is very rich, ranking with Shechem, going back 1,000 years beyond Jerusalem. Things happened there, or in sight, with big meanings for the life of the worshippers; Abraham's altar, so exactly located (Gen. xii. 8), Abraham's and Lot's view, and God's promise (Gen. xiii. 14-17), Jacob's vision (Gen. xxviii). Peters says "ladder" means promontory, as in the "Ladder of Tyre," up and over the steps of which you pass to a rich country beyond. The scenery at Bethel suggests the ladder. Probably the feet of our Lord actually went up and down the Bethel ladder, on His way to the city of Ephraim (John xi. 54), and He used it as an illustration of what will happen at His second Advent (John i. 51). Deborah judged here; Jeroboam made it his frontier city, and to the Southerners it became a hated place, denounced by Hosea and Amos; and King Josiah gave it an insulting nickname, took it, and destroyed it. We note, too, that Bethel stood *where three roads join.* Northward ran the road to Shiloh, Samaria, and Galilee, soon joined by a road from the coast, up which Titus's army marched later to fulfil the worst woes pictured in the Psalms. Southward, the present road avoids Bethel, passing through Ramullah, but in the days of Abraham and Jacob it ran through Bethel to Rama and Jerusalem and Beersheba. Another historic road turns east, by Ai and Michmash to Jericho; up this came Joshua, down

it went Elijah and Elisha when the time came that he was to be carried up (2 Kings ii. 4). Standing on the hill, one sees a moorland country tossed like a bumpy sea. Here Saul lived, at Gibeah; here David and Jonathan walked the field as friends. Here is Mizpeh (whether it be Tel Nasbe or Neby Samwil); Jeremiah's home, Anathoth; the site of a dozen battles, the track of a dozen conquerors. (*Cf.* Isa. x.: a most vivid picture. We can imagine the people on that grim day using the liturgy of Psalm lxxiv.) Across Jordan, seeming hardly a biscuit-throw distant in that wonderful air, are seen the hills where Moses died. With this landscape setting, we are not surprised to find that the Bethel psalms are full of appeal to history, especially to the Exodus; more so than any psalms. "God did promise us our land—Abraham heard that: God is real—Jacob found that: God did give us our land—Joshua found that: God is *here*—it is Beth-el." Encouragement from history comes in lxxiv. 13-15 (Exodus, smiting of the rock, manna, quails); lxxvii. 11, 14, 15-20 (Exodus); lxxviii. (Exodus, the pillar of fire, manna, quails, rebellions and murmurings, punishments, idol-worship, the plagues, settlement in the Holy Land, "high places," sack of Shiloh, ruin of Northern Kingdom, David); lxxx. 8 (Exodus, Promised Land); lxxxi. 5 (Exodus—very vivid—Sinai, Meribah); lxxxiii. (victories over Midian, Jabin, Oreb and Zeb, Zebah and Zalmunna). At Bethel originated the type of appeal so popular later—an appeal in present distress to memories of past triumph, worked out into rhymed versions of olden history.

The Vision before the Worshippers at Bethel.—Like others, this series of psalms is dramatic. We understand best if we see the vision that was in their minds.

They saw *the God of old days*—the mighty God, the God of history, the God of the power of the storm (a vision frequently used), the God above all other gods. In this series of pictures, His hand was outstretched to save: "Thou leddest Thy people like sheep by the hand of Moses and Aaron. Thou didst rend by Thy strength the sea. Thou didst fix all the bounds of the earth. Thine the day, Thine also the night. He is the God of gods: fire burneth before Him, and about Him storm rageth" (lxxvii. 20, lxxiv. 13-16, l. 3). But the God they saw *no longer has His arm outstretched to save*, but drawn back to abandon them. "Why withdrawest Thou Thy hand, Thy right hand into Thy bosom?" (lxxiv. 11-12). Moreover, this God *fixes His eyes on the hearts of the worshippers, not on the worship.* He "searcheth the very hearts and reins" (vii. 9); He speaks to men not of what they are doing in the Temple, but what they are doing in their lives and thinking in their hearts. So in the very presence of such a God, Israel bows down to think out the questions suggested by their surroundings and forced on them by their times. They have not quite reached the sublime poetry of Isaiah's vision (vi.) of a God who does not accuse, yet whose very presence makes man feel ashamed. But it is the same conception. Moreover, their times made a grim reality of the question whether God would help, for

man could not. Down upon their kingdom came the most savage irresistible fighting nation of the ancient world, Assyria; men trembled at their name (Jer. v. 15-18). Samaria stood a siege for three years. We think of the people at Bethel using these psalms in that awful suspense. Samaria fell, and Shechem and Bethel; the last despairing remnant no doubt fled, with nothing but their lives and their hymn-book, to the last holy place still safe, Jerusalem.

Traces of the Influence of the Prophets in these Psalms.—Urgent agonising problems pressed on people's minds: the prophets were the leaders who thought them out. The priests and levites then adapted these thoughts for congregational instruction in public worship. We underrate the liturgical leaders if we only think of the denunciation which the prophets launched at bad priests. The leaders of worship performed an invaluable function in taking great thoughts and making them common knowledge, and their splendidly flexible form of liturgy made it possible. There is close connection between Jeremiah's prophecies and the psalms of the Temple of which he was a priest. In the Bethel psalms as they stand, adapted for use at Jerusalem, we trace specially the teachings of Isaiah and Hosea on three points: (1) God's promises stand, if only Israel is worthy; (2) sacrifice alone is unavailing; (3) the sufferings God sends are not rejection, but discipline. Isa. i. comes constantly to our minds in reading these psalms, and also those called the Prayer of Moses (xc. to xcix.). It is hard for us to realise how the early Hebrews exulted in sacrificial

worship. It seemed to them the completely perfect way of gathering up all their right feelings for approaching God. Everything fitted in naturally with a sacrificial liturgy; prayer, praise, joy, repentance, humility, confidence, edification, the preservation of the old liturgy, its enrichment by the new thoughts of later ages. Do this, and all else followed with it. On God's side it not only stood for His presence, symbolised by the fire: it almost compelled His acceptance of the worship. It was a "covenant," binding on both sides. With the less spiritual worshipper it ran the danger of seeming to be almost a spell or charm, or a bribe. So the prophets feel bound to make tremendous denunciations of it, not of sacrifice, but of the magical idea, that so long as the nation carried out a regular sacrificial worship all was well. Amongst the more thoughtful (and who could help being thoughtful in these days of dread?) there arose almost a distrust of sacrifice altogether. They could not attend with the old heart-whole joy. It was so much more important to search one's heart, to keep the moral law, and ensure national and social righteousness (Hos. vi. 4-11). The priests worked these thoughts into the public liturgies, so that we have the strange fact of a denunciation of mere sacrifice attached to a service of sacrifice—for example, in l., li.

The Thought of these Psalms completed by Jesus.—In several ways He linked up Bethel with His own life on earth. Like these psalms, He insisted that it is not enough to be children of Abraham, they must be "Israelites in whom there is no guile." Like lxxv.

and lxxxii., He announced God's relation to all mankind by a picture of a day of judgment. But His "pleroma" of these psalms goes deeper than such links. The "psalms of conscience" were feeling after something higher than they had reached: they were a noble beginning, but had far to go. The great evangelical prophets carried the thought on; one result of study of the Psalms is appreciation of the depth and appeal of Isaiah and Jeremiah. But Jesus carries it to a different realm, that revolutionises life even from the highest Old Testament level.

They were feeling their way to two things—a knowledge of God: what kind of God He is; and a knowledge of man: what his ideal must be. They thought of a God of majesty and judgment: not rejecting man, but withdrawing His hand in discipline. He will go on teaching, disciplining, appealing to men. It is all on the way to the thought of a God who for man's rescue would become man Himself. It is on the way to it, but it could not reach to it till Jesus showed the fact. He showed a God who literally puts no limit to what He will do to rescue men: a God who will not stay above the thunder and teach and discipline, but will "come among us and with great might succour us." Human thought could never have reached this expectation: it is almost too good to be true; but it *is* true—not an expectation, but an accomplished fact. Such a God will not be easy-going, He will "scourge every son whom He receiveth," for what joy would it be to us to live on eternally with our sinful nature still to be struggled against? Such

a God knows that the eradication of man's sin needs an effort too great for man to make, involving a suffering too great for man to stand—and such a God will actually suffer it for us and with us. The worshipper taught at Bethel sees a God of discipline, awful in majesty on Sinai; the worshipper taught by Jesus sees a God of Atonement, wonderful in humiliation on the Cross.

About man the Bethel message is a noble one: "Learn the lessons of life: blame not God but yourselves; study the Law, apply the Law, examine your hearts, make your effort: so will come prosperity." But Jesus lifts it to a higher level altogether, where all idea of being better for the sake of prosperity has disappeared over the horizon, where the notion that outward worship is sufficient is felt to be ludicrous, though we must not forget that He Himself all His life scrupulously used the outward worship of His religion. There is a tone of self-justification in many psalms which almost grates upon a Christian ear (xvii. 3-5, xxvi. 2-5, xviii. 20-23, xliv. 17-18). This was not moral blindness, but the ideal He has set us has been lifted to quite another realm. The ideal put before the Jew, in psalms and in the Law, was lofty and exacting, but it was humanly possible to fulfil it. It left it open to a man to say, like Saul, that he had been "touching the righteousness which is in the Law blameless" (Phil. iii. 6), and for the young ruler to say, "all these have I kept from my youth up" (Matt. xix. 20). These were not men of shallow thought, but genuine seekers after God. But

Jesus makes us take an ideal humanly impossible: "Be perfect as God." Take this: it will kill you with a sense of its impossibility, bow you to the dust with your unworthiness. Self-satisfaction vanishes; owing God 200 talents, what use to talk of the poor little twopence you have earned? Nor is this a mere device for self-improvement, as if by aiming highest men would at least reach higher; it is the standard by which God will judge; He will not have less than His ambition—perfected men, perfected mankind. But if all He will do is to teach us and urge us, the ideal is hopeless. If, perhaps, God would share our life with us and His life and strength with us in a real "communion," that would make it practical, that and nothing less. But is He that kind of God? Man dare not rest on the hope that He is, or human proof that He is likely to be; God Himself must show it, as proved fact; then it would be the best news ever given to mankind. This is the "glorious gospel of the blessed Christ."

No man can appreciate the goodness of the news until he has been crushed with the sense of his own sin and helplessness, until he feels that the good things of life are matters of character, not of prosperity. Then he can look out at a world in which "the haughty" are prosperous and the servants of God are oppressed without puzzle about the enigma. But first he must be the kind of man who suffers more from the sense of sin than from the ruin the sin may have caused: who finds the joy of being contrite and forgiven a more real joy than money or power or success.

The Bethel psalms were on the way to it; for the Christian they have been completed by the life and death of Jesus. We know our Model, and we know our Model's fate. If we do not doubt God because Jesus died, shall we doubt Him because He allows other innocent suffering? The search of conscience, carried forward at Bethel, finds its climax at Calvary.

CHAPTER XVII

THE TEMPLE AT JERUSALEM

Books IV.-V., Psalms xc.-cl.; the crown of psalmody; chiefly praise-songs, "the perfection of exultation." Procedure of worship. Sequences of psalms sung in procession. Services of thanksgiving for pilgrims utilising their differences of experience to make the full chorus of praise, to emphasise the full joy of comradeship. Illustration, cvii. and cxviii. The completion of their thought by Jesus.

ALL Jewish worship found its final completeness at Jerusalem: all the psalms of other centres came home there: all the faith they reached in God, and especially all the joy that results from that faith, found its fullest expression there: the great praise-liturgies of Book V. are the most glorious flowers of psalmody. It would be impossible to bring out the richness of the Jerusalem psalms except by a detailed commentary, such as Dr. Peters gives in his book. We can only here illustrate the procedure of that worship, see the liturgical framework on which it was built, and to all our existing appreciation add the interest of vivid imagination of its first use.

There was very early a full supply of penitentials—in fact, they somewhat outweighed the element of praise. In the later psalms the supply is chiefly of praise-songs to be sung after the great moment of sacrifice, or in additional liturgical services carrying on the joy of the sacrifice. There is therefore less

indication of the stages through which we have seen a sacrificial liturgy led its worshippers. But these exist sufficiently to show that in its most developed state the service was still such as David celebrated, the psalm was still the psalm of David in a very real sense. Cvii. and cxviii. show the route of the worshippers' procession, and the glorious final liturgy; cxlv.-cl. was also apparently processional; cxlvi., sung without the walls, reaching Zion at its close; cxlvii. within the walls; cxlviii. as the procession nears the altar; cxlix. with dances and sword-waving; cl. as they enter the sanctuary. Acts of prostration with accompanying cry are indicated in cii. 13: "Let God arise"; cxvi. 15, "We lie as dead, but He cares"; and cxviii. 17-18. Whole psalms as prayers of humble access are cii., cxxiii., cxxx. (*De Profundis*); also there are "How longs?" (see Chapter X.) in xc. 13 and xciv. 3, and an "Alas" in cxvi. 3-4, 16. The fire-cry at the sacrifice furnishes the simile in xciv. 1, cxxxii. 17-18: "I have ordained a lamp for Mine anointed." Xc. 14-17 is a praise-cry at the end of a liturgy, but the majority of the psalms are themselves praise-cries to be used as desired or for special occasions. Benedictions occur in cii. 28 and cxviii. 26, and cxxxiv. is a very beautiful parting blessing: "Behold, bless ye the Lord: the Lord bless thee from Zion."

The vision of God propounded to the worshipper at Jerusalem contains all the features that appear in the other collections of psalms, and in their most perfect expression. He is the God of their refuge (the word is frequent), and impregnable Zion is His symbol and

dwel ing (cxxv.). He is God reigning in heaven, receiving the worship of His host (ciii. 20), God above all gods (xcvi. 4-5), doing as He will to all nations, whether in revenge (cix., cxv. 2-8), or in claiming their worship (xcix. 2-3). The thought of His eternity is the comfort of transient man (xc. 2, 10; xciii. 1-2; cii. 12, 24-27; ciii. 14-18). He is the God of history (cv., cvi., cxiv.), the God of nature (civ. most beautifully, cxlviii.). He is a God who disciplines man (xc. 8-12, xciv. 12-16, xcv. 8-10, ciii. 3, 11, 13, cvi.), a God who will judge the world (xcvi. 13). These psalms have specially happy phrases to express the joy and peace of believing, the happiness of the faithful: who shall flourish like the palm, like the cedar of Lebanon (xcii. 12), who find their youth renewed like an eagle (ciii. 5), who are blessed with prosperity and family (cxxviii.), who find the Law of God sweeter than honey and the honeycomb (cxix. 103).

A typical picture of this "perfection of exultation" at Jerusalem can be obtained by the right understanding of Psalms cvii. and cxviii. Cvii. is perhaps the most carefully worked-out liturgy of the whole Psalter: no pains were spared to make it worthy and perfect. It belongs to a group of five (cii.-cvii.), which were used by the pilgrims at the climax of their week of festival. They had come, as we have seen, through hardships (Chapter VI., p. 110); now they are to go singing home; let them offer their thank-offerings with joy. The thronging thousands line up: they are massed in sections according to the quarter from which they had come, for one reason for their

joy was that it was a great reunion—from Parthia and Media and Elam, from Mesopotamia and Cyrene and Crete they had come, to sing the wonderful works of God. Jerusalem was full of synagogues and club-rooms where the people from a region could fore-gather, but this must not go too far: it must not interfere with a bigger thing, the joy of unity and comradeship among all. This must be ensured: so with a splendid instinct that was dramatic, liturgical, and spiritual, they made it part of their service to show their divisions in order to rise far above them into the richest possible comradeship of worship. Each will make its own special contribution, the lessons learnt in its own surroundings, and each strengthen the convictions of all as to the goodness of God.

They break into a joy-cry (cvii. 1-3): "All of us together, from east and west, north and south." Then in four stanzas each division is welcomed and described, with a chorus for the people of that division to take up, and a grand chorus for the whole congregation. Verses 4-9 are the pilgrims from Egypt: "These strayed in the waterless wilderness: the way to the city of abode they found not; hungry, yea thirsty, their soul within them fainted." Like their forefathers of the Exodus, they came through the desert, seeking the abiding city of their nation. They are now satisfied in the Temple of that city. Then comes their heartfelt assenting chorus: "So they cried unto the Lord in their trouble, and He delivered them out of their distresses: and He led them by a straight way" (6-7). Then all the congregation together, rejoicing

in this contribution of certainty about God, "Let them thank the Lord for His love, and His wonders toward the sons of men: for He satisfieth the thirsty soul, and the hungry soul He filleth with good" (8-9). Next (verses 10-16) eyes are turned to the pilgrims from Babylon, and we have words and phrases familiar from other psalms and from the latter part of Isaiah to describe their captivity. "Dwellers in darkness and the shadow of death, bondmen of misery and iron, because they defied God's words, despised the counsel of the Highest. He bowed their heart with trouble: they stumbled, none helping" (10-12). Then their chorus: "So they cried unto the Lord in their trouble, and He delivered them out of their distresses: He bringeth them out of darkness and the shadow of death, and their fetters He breaketh" (13-14). So with this added reason for conviction let all the congregation sing again, "Let them thank the Lord for His love, and His wonders towards the children of men: for He shattereth gates of bronze, and bars of iron He sundered" (15-16). Next it is the turn of the pilgrims from Samaria and the North (17-22), and we see that it is not the main object to be polite, or refrain from rebuke where there is real cause for open protest. Judean feeling was still very decided about "that foolish people that dwelleth in Shechem" (Ecclus. l. 26); they had worshipped calf-images; they had been carried away captive: mixed with foreigners they still continued an objectionable worship on Mount Gerizim (as they do today). Yet Isaiah, Jeremiah, and Ezekiel looked to see them restored to

a united Israel, so they are welcomed as born again out of their destruction, and admonished to resume the true worship. "Foolish ones because of their trespass and for their iniquities are afflicted: all food their soul abhorreth, and they approached the doors of death" (17-18). They take up their chorus: "So they cried to the Lord in their trouble, and He delivered them from their destructions: He sendeth His word and healeth them" (19-20). Then the whole congregation: "Let them thank the Lord [as before]: and let them offer thank-offerings, and recount His works with song" (21-22). Finally, there are the pilgrims who come by sea from the West, from Cyprus and Asia Minor and the Isles and Mediterranean countries. Isa. lxii. 10 indicates that the West had early come within the outlook of the Israelites, and there must have been many a Jonah who went in ships of Tarshish with more mundane motives than this. Wherever Jews penetrated, thence they came back to worship at Jerusalem. The one fact that strikes the hill-dwelling psalmist about these Western brethren is the wonder that they go to sea, and the terrors that the sea suggests, so we have a really delightful landsman's description of a sea-voyage (23-32); we are reminded of Kinglake's description of the pilgrims' sea-voyage in "Eothen." "They that go down to the sea in ships, that do business in great waters: these have seen works of the Lord, and His wonders in the deep; how He spake and raised the storm-wind, which lifted up its waves: they mount to heaven, they go down to the depths: their soul melteth through

trouble: they reel and stagger like a drunkard: all their wit is swallowed up." Surely they have their contribution to make to Israel's understanding of the God of Creation: it is good to have them here with us. Let them take up their chorus: "So they cried unto the Lord in their trouble, and He delivereth them out of their distresses: He maketh the storm a calm, and its waves were hushed: and they were glad that they were still. (Surely another deliciously descriptive touch!) And He brought them to their wished-for haven." So all together again: "Let them thank the Lord for His love, and His wonders towards the sons of men: exalt Him in the meeting of the people, and in the session of the elders praise Him" (31-32). Then follows a confident praise-song, closing with an exhortation to understand these signs of the times (42-43). Two other indications of this joy in the comradeship of worship may be noted. The first is in Psalm lxviii. 26, 27, noticed in Chapter XIV. Secondly, the great liturgy of the pilgrims (cxx.-cxxxiv.) after its sacrificial moment in cxxxii. 16-18, goes on with a joy-cry about the blessing of unity (cxxxiii.): "Behold how goodly and pleasant it is when brethren dwell all together."

We may see from cxviii. the sort of worship that would probably have intervened between the happy mustering and the final praise-song. Cxviii., like cvii., is a thanksgiving liturgy for a great pilgrim festival. After its opening ode (1-14) it indicates the route which its procession would follow, its steps to the altar. In 15 they have come within the walls

of Zion, and there is a rubrical direction, "A shout of joy and victory in the dwellings of the righteous," and one can imagine the ringing out of the splendid cry set for the occasion: "The right hand of the Lord winneth victory!" They feel as David felt, and shout as from his heart, a psalm of David. Then they bow down before this glorious God, and spiritualise their act of prostration (17-18): "I am not dead but live, and tell out the deeds of the Lord. Though the Lord chasten me sore, He hath not given me over unto death." They pass on to the great gates; the summons to open these gates is, as often, made a part of their liturgy (*cf.* xxiv.). The summons rings out, with its ethical meaning: "Open me the gates of righteousness: I will enter therein and give thanks to the Lord": and the answer from those who open it: "This is the gate of the Lord: the righteous shall enter it" (19-20). The anthem that is sung within the gates would have an almost inconceivably triumphant meaning to those who worshipped in the restored Temple, that had been a ruin, but was rebuilt from its strewn and overturned stones (21-24): "The stone the builders rejected is become the head of the corner"; all the glory is given to God, and no man is so happy as he who can feel this partnership between doing his own uttermost and being blessed in his efforts by God. Next, as they approach the altar, comes the humble access, introduced as so often by "alas," a change of tone that would be puzzling if this were merely a lyrical poem, and is so natural in an order of service: "Alas, Lord, save now: alas, Lord, deliver now" (25).

Then comes the priestly blessing as the procession, having crossed the palace area, enters the Temple proper: "Blessed be he that entereth in the Lord's name: we have blessed you from the Lord's house" (26). The sacrifice follows, indicated by a rubrical direction (27*b*): "Bind the sacrifice with cords at the horns of the altar," united with the cry as the fire shines forth: "God is the Lord and He lighteneth towards us" (Chapter XI., p. 147). The liturgy concludes with the praise-song (28-29).

THE THOUGHT OF THESE PSALMS COMPLETED BY JESUS.—As these psalms gathered up and fulfilled the worship of other centres, so the knowledge of Jesus has carried them further, filled them full with their final meaning for His exultant followers. Every certainty the worshipper of old felt has been lifted to a final plane of assurance, every penitence of approach has been deepened, and every joy recertified and expanded. The greatest tribute to the Psalms is that, in the light of Christian knowledge, so little need be modified—only some wishes about the fate of enemies, and some traces of self-vindication and trusting in the righteousness of the Law and man's fulfilment of his share of a covenant with God—and that the old words still remain worthy to express all the new joy that has been poured into human life. Truly, they were a wonderful people, these worshippers of old in the earthly Jerusalem.

Looking through these psalms, we notice that some of their phrases have been quoted as prophetically applicable to Jesus (*e.g.*, cxviii. 22, 26), though not

so many as are quoted from the earlier penitential psalms. In two respects especially Jesus has carried forward to fullest development the thought of these psalms. The first is, that of *the joy of comradeship*, the gladness of recognising that while men differ in human experience and outlook, yet it is a duty, a joy, and a help to try to join their thoughts to ours and stand with them in comrade worship to God: that we shall never understand the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ until we have the interpretation of Him that life has taught to other peoples. The Hebrews extended this to all Hebrew peoples in all parts of the world: the Christian, like his Christ, must extend the thought to nothing less than the whole world. His final vision of worship is given in Rev. vii. 9-17, xiv. 6, and earthly worship must be pressing on to be a reflection of that heavenly scene. It must be nothing less than catholic, world-wide; it must be a final blend of all that Christ has meant and can mean to all peoples, nations, languages, and tongues; and every one of us is impoverished and tongue-tied in his worship till that shall come to pass. "We without them shall not be made perfect." Many of us feel that the great feature of the coming generation in the overseas Church will be the development of characteristic indigenous worship in lands such as Japan, China, India, and Africa, as was pointed out in the Introduction. When that comes to pass, we shall be able to sing the Lord's song with a wider meaning and richer joy than even our most cherished present knowledge of what Jesus means to man can give us.

"Whoso is wise will observe these things, and perceive the mercies of the Lord. This is the Lord's doing, and it is marvellous in our eyes."

Secondly, Jesus has lifted *the joy of human life* to a quite different level. The worshipper of old could remind himself of compelling reasons for trust in God and confidence in facing life, and when we realise that they lived for centuries in a state of affairs comparable to what we faced for four years in the Great War, we begin to appreciate their truly heroic spiritual capacity. The Hebrew could believe in a God of irresistible power, unsleepingly watchful over Israel and over all the world of man: a God of the powers of heaven, a God fighting for Israel, giving Israel the fortress of impregnable Zion, a God whose severities on earth were sent for man's discipline. Jesus has fulfilled and sublimated all those ideas, and added to them the revelation of His life and the victory of His Resurrection. In one respect Jesus has changed the whole content of man's thought from what it was in the Psalms, and surely one that comes home to all men's hearts—that is, in the prospect of death. The Hebrew of old faced the thought of death bravely, but drearily; we need not follow out the gradual development of a hope of immortality, but for the ordinary man there was the idea of those gloomy caverns of Sheol, and at most a shade-existence no gladder than that of Achilles ("Odyssey," xi.). It is hard for us even to imagine the difference between that and the tone that made St. Paul say that "to depart . . . is far better." Nor is it only the Christian

saint who can face death in this hope. We are no braver than the Hebrew, but we are infinitely happier. We can and do read into the Psalms all that was added when Jesus, on the walk to Gethsemane, spoke of the heavenly mansions, and on the Cross spoke to the thief about Paradise. So the Christian message for life is "Rejoice, and again I say rejoice. Be anxious about nothing: but let your requests be made known unto God. And the peace of God which passeth all understanding shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus."

CHAPTER XVIII

THE SYNAGOGUE

The synagogue used the Temple psalms, but gave them a new interpretation, devotional and personal, fitting with the development of personal religion. Synagogue worship at Babylon shown in lxxi., cii. The spirit that produced the synagogue influenced the " new song " of Books IV.-V. of the Psalter; introducing psalms like cxix., cxi.; adding to earlier liturgies passages like xix. 7-14; also the preface psalm, i. When prophecy ceased, the synagogue took its place with similar kind of influence on Temple psalmody. Comparison of Messianic hopes in earlier and later psalmody; cx. . . . Jesus and the Hallel.

SYNAGOGUE worship used the same psalms that were used in Temple worship. It did not produce new psalms exclusively for use in the synagogue, rather it caused the whole Psalter to be used in a different way. The gift of the synagogue to us is that method of interpretation of the psalms as devotional poems which saved this set of sacrificial liturgies from all danger of being discarded as out of date when the Temple was destroyed and sacrificial worship ceased. The object of this book is to show that we have much to learn by reading the Psalms in their original sense. But this in no way lessens our debt of gratitude to the synagogue, which set the Christian world reading the Psalms as the heart's guide for corporate devotion and personal meditation. In the narrower sense, the enquiry how far the syna-

gogue as a home of the Psalms influenced the Psalter is quickly answered; it gave an interpretation of the Temple psalms rather than producing definitely synagogue psalms. We may add that certain psalms were produced that, while included in the Temple Book of Common Prayer, yet would obviously be almost better adapted for use in the didactic and studious atmosphere of the synagogue than in the transaction of actual worship in the Temple—such a psalm, for instance, as cxix., which is a rosary of short psalms about the Law, one for each letter of the alphabet.

The enquiry, however, goes wider than this. The synagogue as a Jewish institution arose during the Exile in Babylon. But it was not merely a result of the outward circumstance that they were far from the church of their fathers in a strange land, that as they could not attend the Temple they must frame some substitute. The nation was passing through deep waters; it was learning something, winning a new spirit and outlook, especially about God's discipline for His chosen, and about individual responsibility. This spirit found its home in the synagogue, and was accentuated by it. When the Restoration came, and the Temple was rebuilt and the people went home, the synagogue was not discarded, nor was the spirit that produced it destroyed. That spirit and outlook ensured its own systematic continuance by preserving the synagogue; and that spirit was very constructively at work in the new Temple psalmody that appeared after the Restoration. In Books IV.-V. of the Psalter

(xc.-cl.) we hear much about the "new song," which linked itself up with the "new birth," the new national life proclaimed by the prophets. It provides a tone and point of view that permeates the "Song of Moses," and the Hallel and other liturgies of the new age. Books I.-III. by no means went out of use; the attitude of restored Israel was as different as possible towards them from the patronising sneers of the neo-Georgian, for instance, about the Victorian age. But, as we should expect, knowing the flexible framework of psalmody and the sensible Jewish way of using it, the new spirit shows itself in new sections and odes introduced into the earlier psalms emphasising newly learned aspects of the truth. We may include the search for these as part of our present enquiry. We should expect to find this spirit especially in any preface or conclusion that was attached to collections of the psalms in an age of collection and rounding off of the Temple liturgies, such as we know the age of Nehemiah and Ezra to have been. The spirit of the synagogue as a constructive influence on the Psalms is interestingly parallel to that of the prophets. The work of the prophet was not to compose orders of service for the Temple, though often the prophet cast his pronouncements into psalm form, and his language was permeated with turns of phrase familiar from popular worship. This line of study deserves an independent treatment. The function of the prophet was to enforce new aspects of the truth; the priest must work these into the liturgies. Psalm xl., for instance, might be said to be Isa. i. turned into a

liturgy. Prophets appeared in Israel after the Restoration; Haggai was to Zerubabel, Malachi was to Ezra and Nehemiah what Isaiah had been to King Hezekiah. After that, prophecy ceased in Israel. But a new institution had now appeared which provided a centre for thinking out the nation's problems from the point of view of their God, the synagogue. The Restoration fostered a "back to Moses" movement; it found its home in the synagogue, its kernel in the study of the Law. Its influence on the current worship was a direct succession to, and a close parallel to, that of the prophets.

A Church that is to teach true religion must care for four things. It must declare a way by which we can be assured of the close presence of God. It must insist that worship is corporate. It must demand the endeavour and responsibility of the corporate body to come before God prepared and worthy, so far as man can be. Finally, it must throw this responsibility back upon the individual; he cannot be saved by being a member of a privileged race or Church. In the history of the thought and worship of Israel we see the development of each of these elements of true religion; not always do they keep clear of the inherent danger of weakening one element while stressing another; there are apparent contradictions of statement.

The earliest worship is pre-eminently the corporate act of the nation, led by its anointed king and its dedicated priesthood, coming before God. The act that was the climax of its worship, the pledge to it of the presence of God, was sacrifice duly offered: this

made them a "righteous" people. We have seen the care that was taken that the worshipper should come to the great moment duly prepared. But in all reliance upon outward acts of religion there is innate the danger that the acts will come to be regarded as magical, as securing a spiritual result simply by their transaction. This occurred in Israel with regard to sacrifice, and with fire of rebuke and scorn the prophets attacked this tendency. What matters most in the eyes of God is the heart of the worshipper; He will have mercy and social justice, not mere correct worship; He abhors the idea of a people with an unclean, unjust social life, thinking all is well so long as they duly observe new moons and sabbaths and offer abundance of sacrifices. We are apt to assume that priest and prophet were usually in opposition, with all the virtues on the side of the prophet; we do not pay sufficient tribute to the generations of "faithful priests" who gathered up into public liturgies the best thoughts of the best teachers of their times, doing a work for their diffusion even more effective than was done by Keble's "Christian Year" for the Tractarian teaching. Through such priests it came to pass that a movement which might have made a breach in the traditional national worship spiritualised and corrected it instead; through them we get denunciations of the superstitious belief in sacrifice embedded in the very liturgies used at the sacrifices. It was at a sacrificial service that the worshippers were taught to say: "The sacrifices of God are a troubled spirit, a crushed and broken heart Thou despisest not, O God" (li. 17), and "magnify

Him with thanksgiving; it is better than an ox to the Lord, than a bullock with horns and hoofs" (lxix. 31). The psalms of Bethel especially reflected this view; the great sermon, put before the people as a direct speech of God Himself—a method often used in the Psalms to mark the things that are most certain and most essential—in Psalm l. about the uselessness of sacrifices without ethical purity, directly follows a Selah which marks the offering of a sacrifice. Thus the people were led on to the spiritual view of sacrifice, which pledges the presence of God, binds God and man in spiritual communion and loving-kindness, and issues in clean conscience and ambitious purity. The Christian Church may look not without envy at the genius and faith that handled such a controversy without a schism. This same openness of the popular liturgies to the expression of new thought, which had been ready for the prophets, was afterwards in turn available for the synagogue influence.

The psalms of Bethel date before the Exile. Then came that disciplinary disaster; it produced the synagogue. In Babylon they must perforce do without sacrifice, for there is this tremendous difference between the Jewish sacrifice and the Christian Sacrament, that the sacrifice could not be sent by their Church to follow the people that ceased to live in the homeland; it could only be offered at the shrine in the Holy Land. "Go through one of your liturgies for us," said the Babylonian; "sing us some song of Zion." "How can we sing the Lord's song in a strange land?" meant much more than mere depression of heart that

made the poetry of the homeland a poignant memory; it meant "we are worship-less" (cxxxvii. 3-4). What was to be done? Some worship they must have: "If I forget Jerusalem, may my right hand forget, my tongue cleave to my palate." So ran this folk-song of the Exile. It is interesting to see whether we can distinguish in the Psalter any psalms that were probably liturgies composed during the Exile, what they retained of the old framework of worship, and what they put in place of the sacrifice at its due moment. These will be a real contribution of the synagogue to psalmody.

Psalms lxxi. and cii. seem to come under this heading. Lxxi. is largely composed of the thoughts and words of the old loved services of other psalms; it reflects the spirit of a people that sees no human hope, yet can rise to assurance because of the thought of God; the very spirit of Ezekiel. "In thee, Lord, have I trusted, let me not be shamed for ever. Speedily rescue me . . . from the hand of the godless. Thou hast been my help from my youth [from my earliest history; it is the nation speaking]; cast me not off in the time of mine age. Be they shamed and confused that play the Satan to me" (verses 1-13). At verse 17 begins a cry of assurance such as usually followed a sacrifice (see Chapter XI.); all disaster is God's discipline, not final ruin or withdrawal of His promises; "when Thou hast caused me to see straits many and evil, Thou quickenest me again, Thou increasest my greatness, and comfortest me again. Shout, my lips, for I would make melody unto Thee, even I whom Thou hast

redeemed. Shamed and confounded are they that seek my hurt." This is the common liturgical form of ensuring an answer to prayer by proclaiming it as already as good as given. Having therefore a " humble access " and a praise-cry, the normal thing to have in between them would be the sacrifice; as there could be no sacrifice in exile, what is inserted in its place? Verses 14-16 show that they substituted a " memorial " of God; an intense endeavour to do all that they would have done naturally at a sacrifice; the word " memorial " was a technical word connected with sacrifice; and " remember," " forget not," are frequent exhortations in the liturgies. " And I . . . continually I wait, and add unto all Thy praise. My mouth narrateth Thy righteousness, all the day Thy deliverances. I enter in Thy power, Lord God; I make memorial of Thy righteousness only." Joined with this intense effort after spiritual communion was apparently the act of turning towards Jerusalem for prayer and worship, of which we read in Daniel vi. 9. In Psalm cii. again we have a deeply pathetic " humble access " (verses 1-11); " Lord, hear my prayer, and let my crying come unto Thee. In the day of my straits incline to me Thine ear; speedily answer me. I am like a pelican of the wilderness. For ashes have I eaten like bread, because of Thy wrath and fury, for Thou hast taken me up and cast me away; my days are like a lengthening shadow." Verse 15 begins a passage of half-assurance; it would be such a lesson to the world if God were to restore His Chosen people from this ruin; " the nations would fear Thy name, O Lord,

and all the kings of the earth Thy glory; if the Lord builded Zion, accepted the prayer of the destitute . . . that the Lord from heaven beheld the earth, to hear the groans of the captives, to release the children of death, to tell in Zion the name of the Lord and His praise-song in Jerusalem." Between these two would naturally come the sacrifice; what took its place? Again a memorial, joined in this case with the usual sacrifice-cry of summons to God to arise (Chapter IX.); "And Thou, Lord, abidest for ever, and Thy memorial to all ages. Do Thou arise, show mercy to Zion, for it is time to pity her, for the feast is come [we can imagine the pathos of this at a Babylonian Passover-tide]. For Thy servants love her stones, and her very dust they pity."

The nation that evolved these psalms in exile was not merely making a technical provision for the absence of sacrifice. Deep thoughts were stirring; they were learning from God's discipline. They were like some little knot of devout Christians who have pushed far out in pioneering life, whom their Church has neglected to follow up with the Sacraments, who keep up their heart-hunger to be ready for the opportunity when it comes, and use the sacred liturgy itself as the best preservative of their longing and readiness, with only the necessary sad omission of what is the heart of the service. We must get rid of all idea that Temple and synagogue were as it were like "Church" and "Chapel"; synagogue services were more in the nature of communicants' preparation-services and classes, linked as closely as possible with the sacrificial

services; in Babylon keeping up the longing hope of restoration; in Jerusalem, after the Temple services had at last been restored, providing a means by which men fresh come from one Temple service and soon to go to another could fill out their liturgy with the fullest private devotion and understanding by teaching, study, and by taking sweet counsel together.

The message of their prophets to exiled Israel was one of magnificent hope; but it laid stress on the fact that Israel must learn the lesson of God's discipline. He could and would restore; but they must first become fit to be restored. There is a very significant difference in the Messianic hopes expressed in the psalms after the Restoration, compared with those of the earlier psalms. It was not that these hopes had been weakened or that the ambition expressed was less; on the contrary, they are as confident and wide as ever. But in the first place the terms of their expression have altered; frequently these hopes used to be expressed in material terms—our land at its best; heaps of corn in the earth high upon the hills. This vanishes in later psalms; the expression is usually in terms of restored character. In earlier times the reason of their hopes was Israel's prowess helped by God; after the Exile it is God alone, the future is His gift. The promises of God to Abraham still stand; there is what may be called a "back to David" movement to assure themselves that those promises have not been yet fulfilled but are not revoked. This appears constantly in the later psalms, by references to the "sure mercies of David," and the promises to the Fathers; "He hath

remembered for ever His covenant, the word He commanded to a thousand generations, saying, To thee I give the land of Canaan, the lot of thy inheritance" (cv. 8-15). It is shown by the love of quoting from the Davidic psalms; cxvi. is a specially interesting example, and also shows the method of making new liturgies at this time by composite use of older psalms with additions to make a service appropriate to the occasion. Its opening verses (1-4) quote the first and last verses of the opening passage of the great Davidic psalm of triumph, xviii. (see Chapter XIII.); this probably means that the whole opening passage between those verses was to be used, filled out with its own names of honour for God as in that psalm; then follows an "Alas," and the David psalm shows by a Selah that then occurred a sacrifice. A praise-song is added appropriate to the Restoration (5-9); "I was brought low, and He saveth me; Return, my soul, to thy resting-place. The Lord delivereth mine eyes from tears. I walk before the Lord in the land of the living." Then comes another inclusive quotation, the first and last verses being given, from lxii. 5-9; the point of the first quotation being the certainty with which man can trust in God's promises, of the second the vanity of trusting in man. Another sacrifice follows; "How shall I repay to the Lord all His bounty towards me? The cup of salvation I lift, and on the name of the Lord I call; my vows to the Lord I pay before all His people." There follows another quotation (verse 15), this time from the gloriously hopeful Messianic Psalm lxxii.; it also may have been a direction to the choir to use

a whole passage; in any case, those who sang it would be singing more than its actual words; they would be claiming its whole spirit; it was a song that claimed that Israel's history was only at its dawn, not in its decay. Another "Alas" of humble access follows; then a passage composed for this Restoration occasion to accompany the final sacrifice; "I am Thy servant, son of Thine handmaid; Thou hast loosed my bonds. To Thee I offer thank-offerings, and on the name of the Lord I call. My vows to the Lord I pay, in the courts of the house of the Lord, in the midst of thee, Jerusalem. Halleluia."

But joined with this persistent certainty that God's promises still stand is a deeper recognition that such promises are conditional, and that the conditions are ethical. Israel must set God free to carry them out, by becoming fit to be His agent for a world-function. The most practical thing therefore that Israel can do is, not to muster armies or form policies, but to become true and faithful servants of God. They must become a truly righteous nation. The demands of God upon His people are expressed in the Law. The synagogue, therefore, became the home of the study of the Law, the elaboration of the Law, and soon of a passionate delight in the Law that is parallel to that delight in sacrificial worship which appears in the earlier psalms. There was no need to discard this when the happy Restoration began; the synagogue which had served so important a purpose in exile found still a function side by side with the services of the restored Temple. From the spirit of the synagogue emanated Psalm cxix.;

we trace it also in the frequent appearance of such words as "precept" (first used in ciii.), and such phrases as "my study" or "my delight." Cxi., the first psalm of the Hallel, put in acrostic form so that all might memorise it, is full of this spirit; "redemption He sent to His people, ordained His covenant for ever. Sure are all His precepts. The beginning of wisdom is the fear of the Lord." Perhaps cx. is the best illustration of the new outlook, that Israel's function for the world is priestly, and that Israel's chief duty in order to prepare for its function is that of worship and faithfulness. It is a Messianic psalm, looking forward to Israel's future, used by the men who with Nehemiah had just experienced God's blessing in the rebuilding of Jerusalem. Its opening verse refers to Nathan's oracle to David (2 Sam. vii.): "Oracle of the Lord unto my Lord; Sit on my right until I make thine enemies the stool of thy feet." It is characteristic, however, of the Messianic hope in the time of Nehemiah that the idea of a royal Messianic ruler has passed into the background; God will exercise His power directly, and will rule on earth directly; it is Messianic times that are to be expected; it is the holy nation to which the promises will be fulfilled, identified with holy Zion rather than with a king. So in verse 2, "The rod of thy strength the Lord sendeth from Zion; rule in the midst of foes"; and in verse 4 the world supremacy which will certainly be given is identified with a priestly function for mankind; "the Lord sware and repenteth not; thou art a priest for ever after the manner of Melchizedek." The nation had just had an

earnest of the fact that God can and will restore it; its people have just rebuilt Zion. Verse 3 points out to them that the essence of their effort has been not military but priestly; their effort has been blessed with success not because they watched or fought but because they were faithful; therefore the climax of their exploit is when they appear in a service of thankfulness on its walls dressed as worshippers: "Thy people freely offered in the day of thy ramparts, in holy apparel from the womb of dawn." Therefore is this youth-time for the nation, because its people are now faithful worshippers and servants at God's disposal: "Thine the dew of thy youth"; we remember how in the psalms of exile and restoration they constantly used this figure to reassure themselves that the nation is not old and decrepit but young and ripe for a great destiny.

We have mentioned the psalms that were added to the Psalter at this period; let us notice also the passages that were inserted in earlier psalms.

There is a poignant interest in following up this subject. One can imagine the feelings in devout hearts: the longing to keep using the old loved liturgies, but also to add to them words that exactly fitted them to the heart's cry in the new circumstances. So we find old liturgies with new sections added, and we find that when something quite new was composed, there was abundant quotation of or suggestion of old familiar phrases of worship. Sometimes a passage from an old psalm was taken to become a complete service, with omissions that themselves are significant. This line of enquiry, which would take too much space to follow

out here, gives us a vivid picture of the psalmist at work, the constructive conservatism of the accepted methods of composition which kept psalmody a living art in a living nation.

Some references may be given. Passages that seem to mark an exiled people clinging to old psalms with suitable adaptations occur in xliv. 9-22, xxvii. 7-14, x. 1-11, xl. 3-10, lxxxix. 38-51, li. 18-19, and lxxiv. 1-9; these are among the most poignant passages in all the Psalter. It is an interesting exercise to trace the influences of the Second Isaiah in the Psalms. After the Restoration, hearts beating with high hope and exultation increased the Messianic passages in the old liturgies, but with a less militant tone (xxii. 27-31); added new exultations (lvii. 7-11, a praise-cry added to an old penitential); thrilled by a new sense that no future hopes are too good to be true when they have such a God as He has already shown Himself by their partial Restoration (xlvi. 8-11).

There is the extremely beautiful conclusion added to a hymn of God's glory in the heavens, xix. 7-14; it is in a quite different metre. "The law of the Lord is perfect, giving life . . . more precious than gold much refined, sweeter than the droppings of the honeycomb." There is a very significant difference between Psalms i. and ii. Each is a non-liturgical literary psalm composed as a preface: Psalm ii. apparently when Books I.-II. were rounded off, Psalm i. as a final preface to the whole collected Psalter. In ii. a militant fighting Israel expects to do to other nations what it had suffered from them; through its king it

shall " break them with an iron rod, shatter them like potters' vessels." In i. the sole thing that matters is that Israel shall be righteous; " in the Law of the Lord his delight, in His Law he museth day and night." This ensures the national destiny, " for the Lord knoweth the way of the righteous, and the way of the wicked perisheth."

Anyone who has seen the prayers at the Wailing Wall in Jerusalem today can imagine the tone of religion of the exiles in Babylon. It is something bigger than any mere sense of personal loss. Moreover, it is not a mere pleading of man's need for God's succour. Prayer and heart-searching became an element of the exile's life which centred in the synagogue in Babylon. The prayers of humble access, the penitential psalms, began to have a meaning apart from the liturgies of which they were a portion. The process found its climax in the development of that element of personal and individual responsibility which is so strangely absent in the earlier psalms. Every Israelite must be a help or a hindrance to the restoration of his people. Ezekiel is the prophet of individual responsibility. The people were ready to say, " I and my fathers have sinned," but they evidently laid the emphasis on the fathers, and invented the self-pitying proverb, " the fathers have eaten sour grapes, and the children's teeth are set on edge." The synagogue became the centre of development for personal religion, the thought of each man about the relation of his own personal life and soul to God. The new development of the sense of sin, the hunger for access to God, the longing for

knowledge of God and His purposes for man, began to be applied by men each to himself personally; even the idea of personal life after death, about which men seem to have hardly cared to trouble themselves, entirely absorbing it in the longing for the continuance of the nation, came in for more discussion. The care of each man for his own soul within the corporate body began; though it was far from getting so entirely out of proportion as it has tended to do in Christian circles, until the benefit to himself of using a practice or attending a service has come to seem the only line of argument as to whether a man shall accept it or not. This is a forfeiting of all true corporate catholic life for which no encouragement can be claimed from the Psalms.

This synagogue development of personal religion gave no new psalms to the Psalter; it continued to be the Book of Common Prayer. But it introduced a new method of interpretation, and this has been the interpretation which the Christian Church has used. It has thus had the most momentous influence in shaping, not the Psalms, but the meaning of the Psalms to Christendom as well as to Jewry. It began in Babylon. Many of the psalms, though orders of public service for corporate use, lend themselves readily for private devotion; this is helped by the fact that the nation is so often speaking as "I" in the Psalms. Then the decree of Cyrus was issued; the perils of the long journey home were ended; the rough rebuilding of the Temple carried through; Israel was again back at its sacrificial worship. It is almost impossible for us

to realise the ecstasy of satisfaction of that first sacrifice described in Ezra vi. 13-22. But the new worship did not forget the lessons of Babylon nor discard the synagogue. The synagogue services linked themselves up closely with those of the Temple; but they were devotional, contemplative, didactic, and partnered by the loving study of the Law. Men began to take the old terms which had applied to enemy races in a new ethical sense; "the proud," "the haughty," "the godless" became ethical terms for self-examination by men of Israel about their own conduct. To merit God's mercy, the poor and needy must be such in heart. The savage wishes for enemies came to be applied to the spiritual enemies of a man's heart. The crudities of anthropomorphic representation of God, as warrior, as smelling the savour of sacrifices, were spiritualised. The Psalms were more and more treated, as we treat them today, as devotional poems alongside their use as liturgies. Finally came the time when Titus destroyed the Temple and Hadrian crushed the last effort for independence; sacrifice ceased. The new use for the Psalms was waiting for them. In time the synagogue forgot their use as sacrificial liturgies as completely as the Christian Church has failed ever to grasp it. If we can retain both interpretations we are surely the richer.

JESUS AND THE "HALLEL."—Our examination of each group of psalms in its home has led up to a link with Jesus, a way in which He has filled them with all possible fulness of meaning. We cannot better conclude our whole study of the Psalms than by

linking up with Him that group of psalms which were the last on His lips before He came to the Cross.

The "Hallel" (cxi.-cxviii.) is a group of psalms collected to form a liturgy covering an octave, for use at the great annual festivals. They are linked together both by sequence of thought and also structurally; each begins with the bidding Hallel, "Praise," and there is repetition of words and key phrases to link them. Everyone knew these psalms by heart; they were used in litany form while the Passover lambs were being sacrificed. Cxiii.-cxviii. were sung at different stages of the Passover supper; cxviii. is essentially a processional psalm (Chapter XVII.), and its use at the supper is a good example of the appropriation of public liturgies for devotional interpretation.

Our Lord said that "with desire He had desired" to eat that Passover with His disciples. At the supper He would use these psalms with them (our translation says they "sang a hymn" before they went out to Gethsemane). We may reverently think that the Psalms fitted home to His thoughts and feelings at that hour, and gave Him the satisfaction which we know He found in repeating other psalms upon the Cross. We may call in their interpreting help towards entering into His mind in that great juncture. It is a valuable devotional exercise to lay the Hallel side by side with the chapters in St. John which represent His own sayings and teachings at the Last Supper and on the way to Gethsemane.

Let us see what is the tone of these Hallel psalms

and their sequence of thought. Finally, let us take from them passages that especially fit with the use of them by our Saviour at the beginning of His Passion. The Hallel is, as its name implies, a liturgy of triumph; the man who used it from the heart must be feeling joyfully sure that He is on the way to certain triumph by the might of the God of Exodus. It begins with two praise-songs arranged as acrostics (cxi.-cxii.). Cxiii. speaks joyfully of the God of Creation, who deals lovingly with man, especially in exalting the humble and meek. Cxiv. tells of the Exodus; cxv. of His fulfilling all His promise to Israel about the Promised Land; cxvi. of the deliverance from the death of Babylonian exile. Cxvii. is a praise-song; cxviii. the most triumphant of processionals, the coming back of God to His Temple. All through, it is God the triumphant, God the Deliverer, God mighty to save and inveterate in love; all through there is the certainty that the man who can say, "Thy will be done," will never find God fail him.

We think of these last words of Holy Writ on the lips of the Saviour who was to be so highly exalted when He started on His way to Gethsemane and Calvary:

Be the name of the Lord blessed henceforth and for ever, from the rising of the sun unto its setting.

Who is like the Lord, that dwelleth on high, that looketh so low, in heaven and on earth? Raising from the dust the poor, to set him with princes.

Cords of death encompassed me, and anguish of hell found me; distres and sorrow I find. And on the name of the Lord I call.

I walk before the Lord in the land of the living.

Precious in the sight of the Lord the death of His saints.

Praise the Lord, all nations, laud Him all peoples; for mighty is His love upon us, and the truth of the Lord is for aye. Halleluia.

Out of mine anguish I called the Lord; the Lord answered and set me at large. The Lord is for me, I fear not; what can man do unto me?

The stone the builders rejected is become the head of the corner.

This is the day the Lord made; let us rejoice and be glad therein.

Blessed be he that cometh in the name of the Lord.

The right hand of the Lord winneth victory! The right hand of the Lord is exalted! The right hand of the Lord winneth victory!

Give thanks to the Lord, for He is good.

EVERLASTING IS HIS LOVE.

HALLELUIA.

APPENDIX

LIFE, SCENERY, AND CUSTOMS REFLECTED IN THE PSALMS

EVERY act of daily life was linked up with God, every relation of home and kin, of village and city life. "Thou knowest my sitting and my rising, my path and my bed Thou hast measured, and all my ways hast Thou cared for" (cxxxix. 2-3). So in a natural and unstrained way the liturgies are expressed in terms of the common life; it needed no new effort to view that in the light of God. Relations to other nations are expressed in terms of the good neighbour or the bad; relations to God in terms of the head of the family or of the clan. Nothing is too simple or ordinary to be used in a liturgy, especially in expressing the sense of the nearness of God, His watchful understanding care of all the needs of life, secular as well as religious. Therefore the Psalms are a rich soil for illustrations of common life. Just as in Egypt the ancient tombs abound with delightful friezes or modelled figures representing intimate daily life, because it was linked on to religion and ideas about the after-life, so we may, as it were, excavate in the Psalms and find similar treasures. There is something fascinating in handling a child's toy of 4,000 years ago; so, too, in overhearing the startled cry of a stumbling child and the hushing of its fears by the parent (xciv. 19).

The following references may be of interest to those who care to follow up this subject. They are only typical, not an exhaustive list. It is advisable to use

Dr. Peters's translation; where this makes a vital difference it is quoted.

Country Life. — The trees join in earth's chorus of praise to God: "Let the field make merry and all therein, all trees of the forest shout for joy" (xcvi. 12; *cf.* cxlviii. 9). "The green olive in God's house" is a symbol of the protected life (lii. 8), and its shoots—not its branches—of a man's children (cxxviii.); the "tree planted by water-courses," of the vigour of the faithful (i. 3); such trees "are full of sap," or "have their fill" from Him (civ. 16). The palm, mentioned in xcii. 12, was also represented as a symbol in the decoration of the Temple shrine. Fruit-trees benefit man and praise their God (cxlviii. 9). The cedar and the fir occur in lxxx. 10, civ. 16, cxlviii. 9.

The wild beasts, who with the reptiles and the flying fowl also join in the praise-chorus of happy dependence upon God (civ., cxlviii.), include some that are no longer known in Palestine. Lions were then a real danger (xxii. 13, x. 9, xci. 13). There is the wild bull or wild ox, translated sometimes unicorn (xxii. 21, xcii. 10). Wellhausen has shown how the idea of the one horn arose not from a misunderstanding of natural history, but from the artistic convention by which in Assyrian and Egyptian sculptures such animals were shown in profile, therefore with one horn only; a visit to the British Museum will make this plain. The horror of a mob of charging buffaloes is vividly present in xxii. 12; experience in Egypt or India today would endorse this, as in the story "Tiger, Tiger" in "The Jungle Book." We hear also of the wild ass (civ. 11). Palestine today can still show among its rocks the coney (civ. 18), the rock-badger, that looks like a rabbit but structurally is first cousin to the hippopotamus. The wild boar still does damage and gives sport in the cane-brakes of the Jordan (lxxx. 13). L. 11 and lxxx. 13 indicate a land of

lizards by speaking of "the creepers of the field." There are many varieties of snake; from the viper and the cobra the unwary foot needs protection (xci. 13; compare our Lord's promise of immunity in His service, Mark xvi. 18, and the incident of St. Paul and the serpent, Acts xxviii.). The darting, whetted tongue of the serpent and the scorpion's poison are symbols of enemy malice (cxl. 3).

Similes from hunting are frequent—the net, the pit, the snare, the cord, the hidden trap; and there is an undercurrent of sympathetic understanding of the feeling of the hunted, typifying man's helplessness when "nooses of hell enring me, snares of death confront me" (xviii. 5, Wellhausen's translation; *cf.* xxv. 15, xxxi. 4, cxxiv., cxl. 5, xxxv. 7-8, xxxviii. 12, lvii. 6, lxvi. 11, xci. 3).

The rich bird-life of Palestine is reflected in the mention of the nest-building swallow (lxxxiv. 3), the "sons of the raven" (cxlvii. 9), the pelican of the wilderness (cii. 6; it was this verse that made the pelican a symbol of our Lord), the owl of the ruins (cii. 6), "the stork whose home is firs" (civ. 17), the lusty eagle (ciii. 5), the lonely bird on the roof (cii. 7); "all fowl of heaven that give song" and "make nests" join with the beasts in happy dependence upon God in the sympathetic creation-psalm civ. For an illustration of the danger of the swarming bees (cxviii. 12) we may again turn to Kipling, in the story of "Red Dog" in "The Second Jungle Book." The sweet, rich "droppings of the honeycomb" were and are a valued food (xix. 10). Two quotations almost invariably come from the lips of the sort of visitor to Palestine who arrives determined to be disappointed; it is an amazing fact that such should come at all, but they do, in droves. One is "Jerusalem the golden"—with a wave of a derisive hand at Jerusalem that now is; they almost invariably think they are

quoting the Bible! The other is, "Is this the land flowing with milk and honey?" The best judgment that I know of Palestine was that of the Australian cavalrymen during the war—landsmen all themselves. They said: "These fellows that sneer at Palestine don't know what land is. This is *good* land. It's like a starved horse, all its bones sticking out; it hasn't had a decent chance; but give it a fair show, and in ten years you would not know it again." That is good Australian for Isa. xxxv. 1-2! But as for honey, it still abounds. Presumably our glib friends expect to find the stones of Jerusalem sticky with it. Their judgment is as if one went to Bethnal Green and said, "And this is the England famous for wild flowers!" Warren says: "I have been through villages where the beehives were in hundreds. There are still rocky cliffs where bees congregate, where the traveller, if rash enough, may suck honey out of the stony rock" ("Underground Jerusalem," p. 478; see also Thompson, "The Land and the Book"; Tristram, "Land of Israel"; and Baldensperger, "The Unchanging East").

Village Life.—Village life has always been a predominant feature of Palestine, and is so in the Psalms. The life is partly agricultural, partly pastoral. In xvi. 6 we see a reflection of the habit which still prevails, of dividing up the communal lands each year into parcels for separate cultivation. This is done by lot. Feelings run high, and "the lot is fallen unto me in a fair place" is the cry of a well-pleased cultivator. Shepherd-life furnishes numerous pictures and similes. There is the tender carrying of the lambs in the shepherd's arms, an illustration of God's care, and all the skilful, careful tendance shown in xxiii.; in lxxviii. 70-71 the shepherd is the symbol of a good king. The claim to be God's flock is a true simile of protection in that land of drought, tangled paths, and infesting wild beasts; so in xxviii. 9, "shepherd

them and lift them up for ever"; see also lxv. 13, lxxviii. 71-72, lxxviii. 52, "He moved His people by stages like sheep" (Driver); xlix. 14; God is "shepherd of Israel" (lxxx. 1), and they are "sheep of His pasture" (lxxiv. 1, and frequently). Sheep are quite humanly silly things in the matter of escaping the shepherd and going astray. Cxix. 176 has furnished the phrase in our Prayer Book confession that we have erred and strayed like lost sheep. (In Melanesia, where sheep were unknown, the Prayer Book made us "err and stray like lost pigs.") The habit of folding sheep in caverns often formerly used as tombs, when shepherds abide in the field keeping watch by night, is reflected in xlix. 14, "like sheep they are folded to hell; death feedeth them," their fate entirely given over to him as sheep to a shepherd. As to goats, the skipping of the rams and kids is about the only attractive thing that can be said (cxiv. 6). Then there are the "cattle upon a thousand hills" (l. 10), cropping God's sweet grass (civ. 14); stubborn mules needing bit and bridle (xxxii. 9); and the muzzled mouth that prevents the idiotic bray of the donkey, fit simile of many a human utterance about God (xxxix. 1).

We see the prosperous village in cvii. 37-38, where men go forth to happy toil until the evening (civ. 23); but there are anxious toilers too, who "rise up early and late take rest, eating the bread of toiling" (cxxvii. 2). Numerous psalms show the happy community festivals of marriage, harvest, and vintage. The Babylonian cult was rich in special liturgies for guild services, when men of a trade gathered to offer corporate worship. May we not think that xxiii. points to a special shepherd service? One likes to think of David instituting such a festival. I was once at Norfolk Island, in the Pacific, at the opening of the whaling season. All the boats gathered in the little

bay, manned and prepared; all the people were on the shore; they sang a hymn, their priest said a prayer for God's blessing on the season's fishing, and off dashed the boats to cross the line of breakers. It was the very spirit of a psalm liturgy; one can imagine a psalm full of local colour if whaling had been a habit of Israel.

In the village lie the piles of thorn-fuel ready for the fire that blazes so fiercely under the cooking-pots and dies out so quickly (lviii. 9, cxviii. 12); if a fire is needed that lasts longer, for smithy work, it must be "coals of broom" that is still reputed to make the best charcoal (cxx. 4). Symbols of helplessness are furnished by the effect of fierce winds upon the ashes, the dust, the light fuel, and from the "bowing wall, the tottering fence"; of a vineyard (lxii. 3) broken down for man and beast to ravage it (lxxx.) The courteous greetings when men meet, or the surly refusal of such greetings, are still a feature of the land (xxxv. 20, "my haters without cause, they wish no God-speed"; lxxxv. 10, cxxix. 8). The bandits, who even under British regime do not hesitate to waylay and murder, are shown in xxxvii. 32, nor is the good Samaritan lacking, a symbol of the God who "healeth the broken of heart, and bindeth up their wounds" (cxlvii. 3). That feature of an Eastern village, the rubbish-heap, is much in evidence; the ruined beggar sits there, as Job did (cxiii. 7); on it would be tossed the "wine-skin shrivelled by smoke" (cxix. 119). Nothing is more prized today as archæological evidence than the broken pottery tossed away four or five thousand years ago, or the "cast tool" (xxxi. 12). The "dross" (cxix. 119), the mire and the dirt and the dunghill and the "vile refuse-water that dribbleth" (lviii. 7), are symbols of degradation and defeat. The danger of the fierce prowling dogs round a village or Bedouin camp is vividly pictured in xxii. 16; the hands and feet are rent in defence from their

snapping bites; their snarling malice supplies a refrain in lix. 6-7, 14-15; the baffled enemy around God's fortress "each evening return, they growl like dogs, and encircle the town; they yap with their mouths, swords in their lips; they prowl for food." To lie unburied and "become a portion for jackals" was a final horror of war (lxxiii. 10); "deliver not Thy beloved to the dogs" has a grim literal reality of horror (xxii. 20).

The peasant psalm *par excellence* is cxxxix.; it sums up all thoughts about God and national history in terms of village life. The enemy are but God's ploughmen; the disasters they bring will but fertilise Israel, preparing them for the rain of God's restoring mercy. We see the snared beast set free, the house-top grass, the reaper and binder of sheaves, the happy harvest greetings, as in Ruth ii. 4. Thus the activities of the peasant and the hunter are illustrated in the Psalms. Two other figures appear, the tamer of mules (xxxii. 9), and finally the snake-charmer (lviii. 5). The charmer is not a mere travelling entertainer, but an expert performing a valuable public service; it is a disaster to the village if he is unable to clear it from this insidious danger, if there is a "deaf adder that stoppeth its ear, that hearkeneth not to the charmer's voice, make he magic most marvellously." His gift is to be able to find and catch snakes and scorpions even when they show no evidence of their presence. Some readers may remember a correspondence in *The Egyptian Gazette* several years ago, about a man who operated round Luxor under conditions that furnished strong evidence that this power was genuine. A good illustration of the danger from snakes is to be found in "Lawrence and the Arabs" (p. 181).

The City at Peace.

Israel delighted in their goodly land; one mark of its goodliness was that it meant security, a defensible land with an almost impregnable fortress of Zion. "We came through fire and water, and Thou didst bring us into security" (lxvi. 12). In an enemy invasion, Israel took refuge in Zion; so long as that stood, the invader was foiled and must retire. This is reflected in xi.; the enemy think our taking refuge in Zion is a sign of fright and defeat; on the contrary, it is our policy of certain safety. "In the Lord put I my trust; how say ye then to me, 'Flee to your hill like a bird!'" This sneering taunt-song is quite mistaken. "The Lord is in His holy Temple; on the wicked He raineth brimstone and burning wind"; they will suffer under the sirocco as the Crusaders did in the first siege of Jerusalem, while we inside have abundance of water. One mark of security is that "cities bloom like the grass of the earth" (lxxii. 16). There is a picture of the happy city in cxliv. 12-15; "our sons like plants waxed great in their youth, our daughters comely, gaily clad in their homes; our garners full, overflowing from base to eave; no breakage, no leakage, no turmoil. Our flocks in thousands, in myriads, in our fields; our oxen stalwart, heavy-laden in our streets." Many signs are noted that mark established prosperity. "Thou dost establish us" is a frequent phrase; children inherit from their fathers (lxix. 36); men call the lands after their family name (xlix. 11); they reap where they have sown (cxxvi. 5-6, cxxviii. 2). In such a city the men are fat; this in the ancient East was a thing of beauty and a sign of prosperity; in lxxiii. 4, one of Israel's perplexities was that among the godless heathen "their men are fat" (Driver; P.Bk., "their strength is firm"). In xxii. 29 the "fat upon earth" are the unbelieving peoples. On

the other hand, one sign of being under a curse is that a man's "flesh has lost its oil" (cix. 24). The insolent enemy are vividly pictured in cxix. 69-70; "impassive like fat is their heart; the proud have besmeared me with lies." The P.Bk. version of lxxiii. 7 is incorrect, but true to the general tone of thought; we would be sorry to lose "their eyes swell with fatness, they do even what they lust."

In this city the men go about in robe and neckchain (lxxiii. 6), with garment enwrapping them, robe over all, and girdle (cix. 17-19; the dandy of today spends money freely on ornate girdles). Every man was a king at his wedding, every woman a queen, as still in the popular marriage-songs of Palestine; the delights and luxuries of xlv. are not to be confined to a royal wedding, except in degree: "Myrrh, aloes, and cassia all thy clothing; music rejoiceth thee; she is all glorious within; pearls woven in gold her clothing; in broidered cloth she is led to the bridegroom." Men live to old age in the happy city, with youth renewed like an eagle's (ciii. 5), and see their children's children (cxxviii.). Marriages are blest with offspring (xlv. 16); there is abundance of children, "households like a flock of sheep" (cvii. 41), who are the gift of the Lord (cxxvii.) and the pride of the mother (cxiii. 9). The sadness of a still-birth is reflected in lviii. 8; sympathy with the weaned child in cxxxi. 2, in which there is a tender simplicity. The little babe has trusted its mother; all the satisfaction it could understand has come from her. The reasons it had for that trust drop out of its life when it is weaned; yet the trust survives. So Israel had lost all the prosperity that stood for the favour of God; yet in exile and ruin it loves and trusts—not the benefits, but the God. The well-known simile of the olive-branches (cxxvii.) gains meaning from accurate knowledge of the tree. Its shoots are not branches, but new young trees growing up with inde-

pendent life from the old roots. The old tree itself may die, yet it is not dead, its life is actually continued in the new young trees. In this sense, for instance, the ancient olive-trees at Gethsemane may be said to be the trees that stood there on the night of the Agony. All trees were cut down by Titus in the siege soon after our Lord's time; but new trees grow again from aged roots. Just so a man does not merely procreate new lives in his children; he lives on in them. There is a beautiful picture of parent and child behind xciv. 19. The writer comforts himself that God is to him like a parent; in all the perplexities and stumbles of life God will be by him. Anyone who knows the slippery streets and rocky surroundings amidst which Palestinian children must play will appreciate the picture; the stumble, the cry of alarm, the parent's arm to save, the quivering nerves soothed by fondling, the return to happy confidence. "When I have said, My foot slippeth, Thy love, O Lord, holdeth me up. In my doubtings within, Thy compassion giveth me delight," brings me back to the joy of confident life again.

There is abundant indication of hospitality and feasting. Besides that private hospitality on which a rich man in the East always prides himself, there are the feasts with which a great service of worship ended, like that of David (2 Sam. vi. 19). In particular the offering of special vowed thank-offerings would also be a largesse to the poor: "My vows I render before them that fear Him; the needy eat and are filled" (xxii. 25). Lxv. is a psalm for the offering of "first fruits"; verse 4 indicates that they feasted in the Temple. These feasts in the Temple are made a symbol of God's rich providence (cxxxvi. 25, cxxxii. 15); He feeds them as He fed their fathers in the wilderness (lxviii. 5, lxiii. 2); He prepares a table for them with the baffled enemy prowling round the fortress walls (xxiii. 5-6); "Israel are sated from the

fatness of Thy house, and the river of Thy delights watereth them" (xxxvi. 8). Comradeship in that feast of God is or should be the happiest of ties, "my intimate friend, we who sweetly feast together, in God's house walk in the throng" (lv. 13-14).

There is also more secular hospitality, when corn and wine and oil make gladness; not without a tendency to wine-bibbing by them that are "mighty to mingle strong drink." The whole course of a feast is elaborately illustrated in the Egyptian monuments, down to the servants carrying home the master who cannot walk. The menu of foods and all festive accompaniments are shown in detail there; just as in the Psalms we hear of the "mouth satisfied with good things" (ciii. 5, civ. 15), the "feeding with the fat of wheat and honey" (lxxxii. 16), "eating marrow and fat" (lxiii. 5). We must not think of these banquets in terms of knife and fork. There is a vivid description of a feast in "Lawrence and the Arabs," p. 267; we hear of "mutton and rice soused in so much liquid butter that they splashed their clothes and greased their faces." Anyone who has been an honoured guest in a Palestine village will make a reminiscent pause, not altogether happy, when he reads of "feasts of fatness." Lxxiii. 10 is translated by Wellhausen "they are sated with bread, and water stands ready for them in abundance." To feed on bread and water to us conveys an impression of poor fare; the Eastern eats bread abundantly as part of the richest banquet. I was once present at a ceremonial Government House luncheon to some great Eastern ecclesiastics; all kind of dainties were offered; bread was provided on the scale that Europeans would eat it. The visitors ate all the bread there was in the house and asked for more; the hostess had to send out and get a fresh supply. So, too, the Eastern people are connoisseurs in the taste of water, and relish it as some people relish

vintage wine. Oil is abundant in the cookery of the East, often to the internal embarrassment of the European; and "faces shine with oil" (civ. 15), anointed with the "oil of gladness, that goes down to the skirts of the clothing" (cxxiii. 2); while perfumes, music, rich carpets, tapestry cunningly woven, and curtains deck the room and the feasters (xlv.). To kill fatlings is a great event; the women of the house spend hours a day forcing food down the mouth of a sheep until it can hardly stand for its fat, especially the fat of its huge tail; to be robbed of this one sheep, as in Nathan's parable to David, is indeed high-handed injustice, and meant a whole winter without fat for cooking.

The city contains all sorts and conditions of men. In its streets are seen the porter, with his load in danger of slipping over his head (xxxviii. 4); the builder with his basket (lxxxi. 6, at the Exodus Israel's "hands were set free from the basket, his shoulder eased from the burden"; we note that no sensible builder will begin without invoking God's blessing [cxxvii. 1]); the ubiquitous potter; the smith with his charcoal fire (cxx. 4); the wielder of the razor (lii. 2); the grain-buyer with his scales (lxii. 9); and the beggar (xxxvii. 25). In its unlighted, unpaved streets it is advisable to go about with a lantern at night (cxix. 105). Amongst its citizens is the good neighbour, who borrows not without returning, but rather is generous (xxxvii. 21); who scattereth and giveth to the poor (cxii. 5, 9). When the bailiffs are in, and "a creditor snatcheth all that a man hath and strangers make spoil of his toil" (cix. 11), then the good neighbour shows him kindness (cix. 12), becomes his surety, ransoms him (cxix. 122); he is father of the fatherless, advocate for the widow (lxvii. 5-6), "rescueth him that hath no helper" (lxxii. 13, lxxxii. 3), "raising from the dust the poor, from the

dunghill he lifteth the needy" (cxiii. 7). He "hath sworn to his friend and faileth not; his money he hath not given on usury nor taken reward against the guiltless" (xv. 4-5). Over against him is the bad neighbour, in all things his opposite. He is a cadger, borrowing and not repaying (xxxvii. 21); "he persecuted the poor and him that was cowed in heart, and remembered not to show kindness" (cix. 16). The unjust judge is his ally; that combination of him who "plays the satan against me" and "the unjust judge set over me" is the greatest of inflictions (cix. 6-7). He is a purblind money-grubber, "heaping up, not knowing who shall gather it" (xxxix. 6); "man with wealth without understanding is like the beasts that vanish" (xlix. 12, 20).

Much of the public life of the city centred in "the gate," as it does today at the Jaffa Gate or Damascus Gate of Jerusalem. Business is done there before witnesses (Ruth iv. 1-12). Men gathered there for all kinds of purposes. The story-teller can always gather a crowd (*cf.* Jer. vii., xxxvi.); one can imagine, too, the returned traveller vividly describing to these landsmen the sufferings of a sea-voyage (cvii. 23-30). In the gate the rulers fearlessly "look upon the enemy" in defiant embassy (cxxvii. 5), or welcome a hero king or a religious procession (xxiv., cxviii.). No misery is like that of becoming a byword in the streets and in the public gossip of the gate, of those who "sit in the seat of the scornful" (i. 1, xxxi. 18). The vocabulary of derision in the Psalms is large and expressive; a man becomes a reproach, a rebuke, a sign; men wink the eye (xxxv. 19), shoot out the lip, wag the head, make mouths, grin, gape, grimace, gnash the teeth (xxii.); drunkards make songs of the unfortunate (lxix. 12), "yea, the very abjects gathered themselves together against me, smiting when I knew not; they tear, and cease not. They grinned at me

with their mouth and said, 'Aha, aha, our eye hath seen'" (xxxv. 15, 21). These taunt-songs are frequently levelled at Israel in the Psalms (xiii. 4, xxii. 8). Plots are hatched in the gate, "amid the defaming of many, terror from all sides, while they conspired together to take away my life" (xxxi. 13). The unfortunate's acquaintance and kinsfolk avoid him (xxxi. 11); "there is none to help" (xxii. 11); it may be that even "my father and my mother forsake me" (xxvii. 10). The great hope of the people is a good king, or in later psalms God Himself as their king. He is the righteous judge, guided by God in judging (lxxii. 1), the "shield of his people" (xxxiii. 20), especially careful of the unfortunate (cxlvi. 7-8). Prayers for the king occur in lxi. 6, lxxii. 15, lxxxiv. 9, xx. 9.

Even in the happy city men are not free from human ills; there are the blind, the hungry, the woeful (cxlvi. 7-8). Men fall sick; there is no mention of a doctor; it is the part of the good friend to bind up the wounds of body and mind, to fast and pray for them; "in their sickness sackcloth my clothing, with fasting I afflicted me" (xxxv. 13). The different attitudes of earnest prayer are indicated; the beating of the breast (xxxv. 13, "my prayer returneth on my bosom"; lxxvii. 4, "I beat my breast and spake not"); the lifted hands (xliv. 20, lxiii. 4, cxxxiv. 2); the body spread flat on the ground, as David lay all night before the Lord interceding for his sick child (lxxvii. 2, "my hand by night was spread out ceaselessly"; lxxxviii. 9, "I have called Thee, O Lord, all day, I have spread out to Thee my hands"; each of these passages occurs at the stage of a liturgy where a prostration is indicated, before a Selah). Expressions of bodily suffering are frequent, the tossing on the bed, the sword in the bones, the burning reins, the wasted eye, and so on; the release when God brings healing

is vividly expressed in xli. 3, the cool change of bed to a patient in fever: "The Lord maintaineth him on the pallet of disease; all his bed hast Thou changed in his sickness."

Men die; it is surely strange that there is not even one funeral liturgy. The true friend has now but one tribute to pay—he will walk in the funeral, dust upon his head: "as for a kinsman or a brother I marched; as in mourning for a mother, in filth I bowed down" (xxxv. 14). The professional mourners prove results by "putting their tears in a bottle" (lvi. 8). That grief was genuine, and could find true elegiac expression, we know from David's laments over Absalom and Jonathan. It is strange again that in the many battle psalms there is no sign of a lament over the fallen when Israel was victorious, only of the unhappy dead after a raid or defeat.

One foundation of Jewish permanence has always been its home-life. In early psalms the expression of crowning national prosperity tends to be in military and political terms—the defeated foe, the universal reign of Israel's king. Later, it is beautifully expressed in terms of happy homes; a family-nation with a father-God. Cxxvii. 3-5 and cxxviii. are supreme in the poetry of the home, especially the ideal vision of the latter—toil and reward, vine and olive, strong children and happy parents; the vision calls out a beautiful blessing on the nation; nothing better could be wished for it. Contrast the unhappy home indicated in lxix. 8, l. 20, full of slander, division, and breach of all kinsfolk kindness. The term "father" used of God occurs only twice: He is "father of the fatherless," a father pitiful to his own children (ciii. 13). But the picture of the true father is there; also the picture of God as "next of kin" ready to take up His people's cause (lxxviii. 35, in their catastrophe

"they remembered that God most High was their next of kin"); also of God as master watchfully responsible for His servants (cxliii. 12).

The City at War.

This is even more fully illustrated in the Psalms. But we need not show it in detail. The appalling horrors of ancient warfare are depicted with sickening realism on the monuments; they are not less vivid in the Psalms. We should understand this, that we may do justice to the faith of Israel, and make allowance for their lapses into vengeful prayer, and understand their sheer longing for God's power and protection. But this horror of warfare is happily no longer a feature of the life either of Palestine or of English readers of the Psalms. We may pass it over with only sufficient illustration to enable us to think ourselves back into the minds of those who first used the Psalms in their sore need.

One constant complaint is of the treachery of surrounding races. Even in peace they are "foes without cause" (lxix. 4, and the constant references to words smoother than butter but from hearts that hate; slippery lips, words that are swords). They conspire for war; even allies do this. The sorest feeling is against Edom, children of Lot, who should be natural allies of the children of Abraham (cxxxvii. 7). Almost as much dreaded as invasion was the enemies' attack by curses and enchantments, as in the case of Balaam. The vocabulary of charms and spells is large; the curse that brings drought or pestilence, the devices of the "bitter word" (lxiv. 3), of the burying of a charm (lxiv. 5-6), the "shaking of an image against me" (lv. 3; substitute for A.V. "they cast iniquity upon me"), the knot-tying (xciv. 20, "Doth hell's throne bind thee with charms, devising mischief

secretly?"); all the well-known devices of "sympathetic magic"; "he heapeth up devilry; against me all my haters make charms" (xli. 5-7). The dread of such attacks is shown by the large number of counter-charm liturgies, which sometimes rise to great spiritual beauty (cxxxix.), but often descend into invocations to God to do the same to those others: "Turn his wickedness back on his own head" (cix.). Worst of all is the fear of treachery at home, confederate with the enemy, as in the days of Nehemiah; see lv. 12-15.

The enemy forces are set in motion, and invasion impends. There are anxious times. Rumour sweeps through the land (lxix. 4, lxxxiii. 4-8). There is "terror by night" (xci. 5); the watchmen are set (xc. 4, cxxvii. 1, cxxx. 6). There is inspection of defences; they "encircle the walls, set their mind on the ramparts" (xlviii. 12-13), strengthen the bars of the gates (cxlvii. 13). There are songs against cowards and slackers (lxviii. 13). The villagers flee to the fortress cities, taunted by the enemy (xi. 1), but really wise in using their "tower of strength" (lxi. 3) to "take refuge from the bowmen" (lx. 4). The people throng the shrines to supplicate God, using such liturgies as lxxvii., to "make memorial" of His former mercies, to "cry day and night before Him" (lxxxviii. 1), to reassure themselves that faith is better than an army (lxxxiv. 10), that God is their real fortress (cxliv. 2).

The enemy advances; the further descriptions bear signs of grim experience. There is raid, ambush and robbery (xliv. 19-22). Battle is to be joined; there is a liturgy to be used on the battlefield (xx.) while the enemy are performing in their own lines a parody of this faithful service (lvi. 5, "all the day my words they pervert; against me all their charms for ill"). A liturgy for use in the field after victory is all ready for use (xxi.). But too often Israel is worsted, turning

the back (xlviii. 9-14), fading away suddenly like a dream, melting like wax, coming to a fearful end (lxxiii. 19-20). The valleys are filled with dead bodies (cx. 6), which lie unburied (lxxix. 2-4), food for beast and bird (lxiii. 10). The country is ravaged, vineyards destroyed (lxxx. 12-16); men sow in fear under shadow of invasion; the harvest, if they reap it, will be doubly joyful (cxxvi. 5-6).

Then the city is besieged. There are glimpses of that worst horror of all, when the scum of the people get the upper hand and ravage the streets, as in the siege of Titus; there is "violence and strife in the town" (lv. 9). In the "golden age" picture one feature is that there is "no turmoil" (cxliv. 13); one who has seen a riot in the narrow streets of an Eastern city can picture the horror. This illustrates the picture of the "servant" in Isa. liii.; he will not "lift up his voice"; he will be a real leader, not a Barabbas or a John of Gamala, meeting danger with cruel hysterical popular riot. The city is filled with lamentation and terror (lv. 4-5: "alarms overwhelm me," lxxxviii. 16; "tears my food," xlii. 3; "buckets of tears," lxxx. 5). No marriages now (lxxviii. 63); rather its young men burnt with fire (lxxviii. 63; the grim phrase, "God setteth a blaze round about His foes," finds illustration from the story of the Crusaders at Hattin). There is pestilence (xci. 6), and starvation, "widows and children seeking and searching among ruins" (cix. 9-10). So the horrors go on; the people are minished, brought low, in oppression and trouble, made to wander in pathless wastes (cvii. 39-40).

The city is taken, and the crowning miseries follow; lxxiv. 3-8 literally translated vividly pictures the assault and sack of a city, the din, the pitiless bloodshed, the ruin, the taunting desecration of shrines. "In Mount Zion where Thou hast dwelt Thy footsteps mount

to utter ruins. Thine adversaries roared in Thy meeting-place; they set up as standards their standards. They seemed like men lifting on high axes in a thicket of trees. And now the carved work also they shatter with hatchets and adzes." The children are brained against the stones (cxxxvii. 9); the priests are killed. The owl hoots among the ruins (cii. 6); the city is an unwalled desolation (cxxxvii. 7, lxix. 25), such as Nehemiah explored on his night-inspection.

There follows the misery of the caravan of captives led across the desert, doomed to exile, slavery, insolent derision and death. They are bound with cords (cxxix. 4), bondmen of misery and iron (cvii. 10).

To read the penitential psalms in which these miseries are pleaded before God, remembering that such phrases as "break their teeth in their mouth," "crush the head," "feet red with blood," "dash in pieces" are to be taken with appalling literalness, is a horror-striking experience. The miserable remnant may be glad to escape "blotting out," extermination of man, woman, and child (lxxxiii. 4), and to escape and hide in crannies of the cliffs (xviii. 45). Particularly vivid are the pictures of the flight of a defeated army. Palestine in fine weather is a dusty, in wet a slippery, country; similes of the dust before the wind, of the slipping foot and the treading well-nigh gone, are frequent and vivid. "I am sunk in the mire of the bog, where there is no standing, parched is my throat," represents the plight of Sisera escaping across Esdraelon where so much of our own motor-transport bogged hopelessly in the late war (lxix. 2-3). "Be their way dark and slippery and the angel of the Lord driving" shows the flight down a slippery wady as in Joshua's pursuit from Gibeon down the pass of Beth-horon; it will be all too well understood by the Anzac cavalry who had to retreat with their wounded from Amman down those slippery trackless slopes of

Transjordania in 1918. When we read the Psalms thus, we begin to appreciate the marvellous tenacity of faith that brought a people fresh from such sufferings through the Exile in Babylon with unbroken spirit, and on to the joyful confidence of the liturgies of the Restoration (xc.-cl.).

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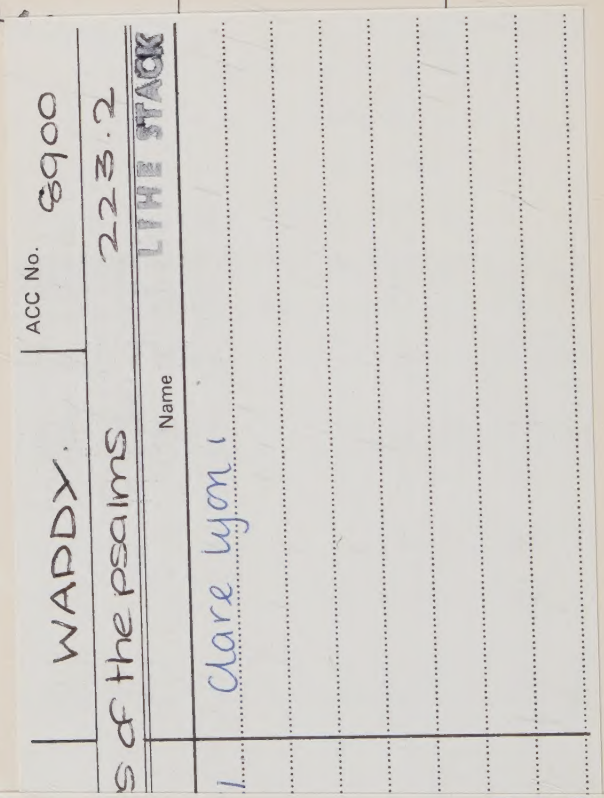

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